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Notes and News 369
Official Intolerance of Criticism ... 372
The *Spectator* and the Over-Population Bogey 72
India under Home Rule, by E. H. Pickersgill, M.P. 374
A Literary History of India 375
Our London Letter 376
Chronicle of the Week 377
The Committee on Currency 378
India in Parliament: The New Loan Bill 379
Advertisements 383-384

NOTES AND NEWS.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN'S proposal on Tuesday night, on the order for the second reading of the East India Loan Bill, strangely affected the equanimity and "optimism" of Lord George Hamilton—a point we notice in another column. The proposal was not merely reasonable; it was moderation itself. The terms were:—

> That this House declines to sanction a sterling loan of £10,000,000 until a Select Committee, on an examination of the East India accounts, shall have reported that such loan is in the interest of the Indian taxpayer, and will not unduly increase the burden he now sustains.

The motion limited itself to a Select Committee for a particular occasion. On the Indian Budget debate, August 13, 1896 (India, September, 1896, p. 102), Sir William Wedderburn moved an amendment in favour of an annual Select Committee to conduct such financial investigations regularly, so as to afford in some measure the checks that were periodically applied, with excellent results, to the operations of the East India Company, checks that have been so disastrously discontinued since 1858. Even that very much larger claim was reasonable and moderate. In their evidence before the Finance Commission, Sir Auckland Colvin and Sir David Barbour, whom not even Lord George Hamilton would accuse of rashness or perverse desire to embarrass the Government, did not hesitate to accord support to the proposal—qualified support, no doubt, but yet substantial and suggestive.

The suggestions of these distinguished authorities are well worth recalling. We have already set them forth (India, December 1896, p. 355), but we may repeat them now. Both admit that the Government of India does not give sufficient attention to financial considerations, and both look about for an effective remedy. Sir Auckland Colvin (Q. 3,123) looked to—

> strengthening the financial interests in the Council of the Secretary of State, and ultimately trying in some way, without undue interference with the authority of the Government of India, to establish a control emanating from what theoretically is at present the last court of control—Parliament.

It is not easy to see how Parliament could more simply attain the desired end than by the agency of a permanent or annually appointed Select Committee of its own members. Sir David Barbour went frankly to the point. He said (Q. 2,235):—

> I should think it would be a very good thing, especially as regards Indian affairs, if, when Parliament had to do with them, it appointed a Select Committee to report from time to time upon particular things; that, I think, would be very good. It would be most dangerous if Parliament interfered without first taking the report of a Select Committee, or of some other special body.

This statement of Sir D. Barbour's appears to support in precise terms the very course that Sir William Wedderburn's motion urged. The one thing Sir D. Barbour feared was Parliamentary "interference in details;" and his reason was that such interference usually proceeds "on very insufficient information." We agree with him in deploring the "insufficient information" with which Parliament contents itself, and we see no better means of getting over the difficulty than the appointment of a Select Committee, whether annually or in special cases, as recommended by Sir David Barbour and as urged by Sir William Wedderburn in his amendment on Tuesday night. A Committee of this kind would at least combine and utilise such expert knowledge of India as the House of Commons contains.

If Sir William Wedderburn's amendment had been carried in 1896, we venture to believe that the present loan Bill would never have been submitted to the consideration of the House. A Select Committee would by this time have revealed enough to put the drag upon Indian expenditure. The duty of the House, as Sir W. Wedderburn then said, is, if difficult, still "manifest and admitted"; "no one considered that the present state of things was creditable." England is in the position of a trustee towards India. Yet, while a trustee is sternly required in English law to exercise a much higher standard of diligence in dealing with the trust funds than he regularly applies in his own affairs, "in the present case," said Sir William with indisputable truth, "there is a painful contrast between the promptitude and rigour with which the House looks after its own finances, and the indifference with which it treats those of India." The contrast stands out as glaring to-day as it did two years ago. The lapse of time only accentuates the necessity for its removal. The scheme for a permanent and efficient reform then sketched is not only simple and moderate, but gains emphasis by every year's delay. What could be simpler than that the Government of India should send home yearly a special report on the financial condition of the country, based on the debates on the Indian Budget in the Viceroy's Council, so as to provide distinct issues for a Select Committee to examine and report upon to the House, thus furnishing means of information for the proper discussion of the Budget? The existing procedure is a farce and a by-word. More than that, it is a disgrace to the governing Power. A Secretary of State may split straws over the matter to the end of time; but then we shall be no nearer to a just and honourable discharge of our duty as trustees for India, unless some such course as that which is proposed be adopted.

The fundamental stumbling-block is but too obvious. The official mind will not stand any enquiry into official representations and official acts. Blue-books and White-papers are submitted to Parliament shortly—in recent years all too shortly—before the Indian Budget comes on. There is provided, with apparent thoughtfulness and helpfulness, an "Explanatory" Memorandum. The Secretary of State speaks two or three columns of figures and a peroration of satisfaction and general applause. What can the House want more? If there be a surplus, all is right. If there be a deficit, a loan is handy, and there is sure to be a surplus in the promise of the immediate future. It is all over in an evening. Lord George Hamilton and Sir Henry Fowler fall on each other's necks, and the House applauds. But even if the Blue-books and White-papers have been circulated in decently good time, there is much in them that needs elucidation—an elucidation that is not forthcoming, for want of time, if for no other reason. The "Explanatory" Memorandum, as we have said before now, itself needs to be explained; and there is no time or opportunity for anything like an adequate explanation. The Secretary's figures must be taken on trust. The ridiculous tradition of wonderful administrative feats is not to be spoiled by the cold dissection of experts. The blessed word surplus, and the blessed word loan (in case of deficit)—these end the business, as if the real questions did not lie grimly at the back of them. Our fiduciary duty is guaranteed by blind confidence in the official figures. To ask for explanation or information borders on a personal insult. Why on earth, then, should the House trouble itself at all with such an irrelevance as the Indian Budget?

Lord G. Hamilton, in the course of Tuesday's discussion, indignantly repudiated the assertion that the Government

of India was too apt to put confidence in spies and flatterers, and declared that it did everything it could to ascertain the views of the Indian community. Will he tell us upon what Indian recommendation the recent repressive measures have been enacted?

The extraordinary doctrine which Sir James Westland seems to have laid down in the Budget discussion, that "as a financial question we have to see that in this country the courts, as a whole, pay their way," has naturally provoked criticism. The administration of justice is one of the primary duties of every Government, and to keep the civil courts inefficient, unless enough fees to support them adequately can be squeezed out of the wretched litigants, is a policy which it is amazing to find a member of the Government ready to avow. It is only a step removed from the practice of medieval Europe, when the courts were made a source of revenue. And yet we shall of course continue to hear much of the enlightened principles on which the Indian Empire is administered, and those of us who cannot re-echo without qualification the chorus of praise will continue to be denounced as bad citizens.

Commenting on Sir Henry Fowler's speech of Tuesday week, the *Spectator* writes in its current issue:—

Sir H. Fowler, we see from this debate, estimates the "tribute" paid by India to England at £7,200,000. It is nominally, he says, £16,000,000; but of that amount £8,800,000 is payment in respect of railway dividends and interest,—that is, in fact, payment for the hire of capital. That is true, and should not be forgotten; but it is not quite the whole truth. We have to add to the £7,200,000 the whole of the remittances on family account made out of incomes paid by the State, and the modest fortunes sent home by officials, which together cannot, we believe, be less than £2,000,000 a year, and may be more. Twelve per cent. on her whole revenue is a good deal for one country to pay to another for the privilege of being governed by her. The privilege is well worth the money to India, because she thereby secures internal peace, freedom from invasion, and wise, though rather "leaden" government; but we ought not to hide from ourselves that we are paid, and in hard cash, for our services.

Of course the amount of the Indian tribute is greatly under-estimated both by Sir H. Fowler and by the *Spectator*. But the point of view is worth noting for all that.

As a consequence of plague and famine, there has lately been a decrease in the excess of exports from India over imports. It might, therefore, be thought that the tribute paid by India was reduced by the same amount; but it is scarcely necessary to say that this is not so. Good years or bad, in times of famine or of bountiful harvest, the interest on the debt, the pensions, and the various other home charges have to be paid. If the excess of exports is not sufficient, the future must be mortgaged and a new loan put on the market, to increase the drain on India in the years to come. We can, therefore, understand the growth of the Indian debt. The *Times of India* says:—

Meanwhile the sterling debt of India, which the City of London now shows a reluctance to increase, is growing apace. The statistical abstract shows that at the end of 1887-88 it was a little over 84 millions. By the end of 1895-96 it had grown to a little under 114 millions, and to-day, as has been shown, it stands at a little under 123¾ millions. The Government of India, meanwhile, have plans for increasing it by five millions sterling at one stroke, and ultimately by twenty millions. The tendency is all in one direction—to a rapid enlargement of debt, unaccompanied by any perceptible reduction in the amount.

The *Pioneer* thinks that with the rise of exchange some exports will continue to decline, and among these is opium. Now the substitution of food for opium in Indian agriculture would be in itself a good thing, but as the revenue thus lost would be made up from other sources, it would mean increased taxation. If the opium revenue continues to fall, it will undoubtedly be a serious set-off to the gain due to the rise in exchange, whatever else may be thought of it.

Dr. Weir, the Health Officer of Bombay, in a lecture on the plague in that city, appears to have condemned the method of segregation which was followed by the authorities, and stated his opinion that the removal of suffering patients could do no good and "may possibly spread the disease." The practice spread alarm among the people, who ceased to call in medical men. "Not one per cent. of the people who died had seen a medical man in their last illness." These are weighty words, and if Dr. Weir's statements are accurate the Government of Bombay has blundered in enforcing measures which are of little utility, which are distasteful to the people, which spread alarm and cause disturbances, and which have added to the sufferings of the people without helping to stamp out the plague.

Happily the time has passed when those who distrusted segregation and quarantine were looked upon as captious or even seditious. The tide seems now to be running in the opposite direction. The following appears in the *Times of India*:—

RANGOON, May 20.

The local Government, replying to the letters from the Chambers of Commerce, Trades' Association, and the municipality, says it is unable to sanction the imposition of quarantine, and that the Home and Indian Government think it mischievous, tending to foster rather than suppress the epidemic and cause hardship and suffering, and giving opportunities for bribery, blackmailing, and extortion. The collection of large bodies in the camp is likely to establish fresh foci for the spread of the disease. From experience it has been observed that it inflicts the maximum injury to trade without affording real protection. The Indian Government is thus averse to depart from the general principle of not allowing quarantine on one Indian port against another.

Also we may note the excellent spirit of the concluding words of the memorial presented by the Indian Medical Association to the Bengal Government:—

That Government endeavours to restore confidence, peace, and happiness to the inhabitants of the city—chiefly the native population—by adopting such measures for the prevention of the disease which, while they ensure public safety, do not conflict with social customs, caste prejudices, and other religious feelings of the Hindu and Mahometan communities.

The following account of the rioting at Garhshankar, which appears in the *Englishman* of May 2, seems to show that needless loss of life was caused in the suppression of the disturbance:—

The people concealed the cases and refused to segregate the sick, evacuate the town, or give information with regard to the progress of the disease. It having been decided to turn them out, they were ordered on the 27th instant to come out. Next morning the plague officers proceeded to the town with a police force to arrange for the evacuation, the small number of police being armed with Sniders and buckshot. A crowd was found collected at the corner of the town and assumed a threatening attitude. The force of fifty police while advancing up a narrow lane was suddenly assailed from the house tops with showers of brickbats, a number of the police being hit. Several constables, exasperated at this treatment, loaded and fired without orders, and in the confusion could not be controlled by the officers. The firing was stopped as soon as possible, and the police forced their way out to the main body. Altogether nine persons were killed and twenty-seven wounded. Reinforcements of police were then sent for, and meanwhile the crowd retired to their houses.

What punishment has been meted out to the constables who fired without orders?

The *Bengalee* has another terrible story of an assault by a European on an Indian, whose death followed. At Kumerkela, on May 15, Jagodes Tewary, having failed to collect some coolies for night work, reported this to his master, Mr. H. Ambler, assistant manager to H. Deer and Co. Thereupon Mr. Ambler is reported to have lost his temper, thrown the man down, hit or kicked him senseless, and walked away; nor, it is stated, did he when told of the man's plight do anything to assist him. However, on hearing of his death an hour or so later, he tried to remove the body by train, but was prevented. As the matter is still *sub judice*, the accused having been released on bail, we refrain from comment at present.

Madras mourns the loss of the Hon. Mr. H. T. Ross, the member of Council in charge of the Madras Tenancy Bill, who committed suicide by shooting himself through the heart on May 14. It is said that he had had an attack of insanity on a previous occasion, and that the recent refusal of the Government of India to allow him the special pay recommended by the Madras Government affected his mind. The *Hindu* remarks that as a judicial officer he had not his equal in the Province, that the public had trust and confidence in him with reference to the Bill of which he had charge, and that during his recent tours in search of information he impressed the people not less by his courtesy and patience than by his judicial temperament and high abilities.

As for the Bill itself, which was drafted after the model of the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885, it met with a strange fate when it was introduced in the Council at the hill station, away from Madras. Five non-official members—the Rájá of Bobbili, the Hon. Subha Rao, the Hon. Mr. Arbuthnot, the Hon. Mr. Rangia Naidu, and the planters'

representative—were unable to attend the Council held at Ootacamund. The Hon. C. J. Mudaliar accordingly asked for the adjournment of the debate for two months, and ultimately an adjournment of a month was granted. To hold meetings of the Council in the hills to discuss the Madras Tenancy Bill is like convening Parliament in the Orkney Islands to discuss the Irish Local Government Bill.

The importance of wells in India for purposes of irrigation has often been noticed in these columns, especially for parts of the country which are unsuited to the canal system. One reads with pleasure what has been done in this direction in the North-Western Provinces under the wise and sympathetic administration of Sir Antony MacDonnell. We quote the following from his Resolution:—

Stimulated by the officers of Government, who went freely among them urging them to exertion, they shook themselves free from their traditions, and encouraged by the prospects of protection and support in their efforts at self-help, the agricultural community rose to the occasion. A census taken by districts gives the number of temporary wells constructed under this stimulus at the enormous number of 550,759. The number of masonry wells constructed is placed at 4,227, and many others were repaired and improved. Other facilities for irrigation, such as embankments and tanks, were largely extended. Altogether it is calculated that the additions made to the various sources of irrigation at the moment were sufficient to protect 1,381,494 acres and produce 465,000 tons of food. The policy of stimulating the construction of temporary wells was thus signally justified by the result.

An esteemed Anglo-Indian correspondent sends us the following note upon the question of exchange:—"India has a debt of, say, 15 or 16 millions sterling to pay in England. To do this she buys with rupees sufficient commodities at their market price in India, sends them to England for sale, and pays the debt out of the proceeds. The machinery for effecting the operation consists of merchants, bankers, and brokers engaged in trade between India and England, and their profits enter into the cost of the commodities to the Government. The rate of exchange of rupee in India for pound sterling in England is the proportion between the gross cost of purchase in rupees and the net proceeds of sale in pounds sterling. If, then, the closing of the mints has affected the rate of exchange, this must be because it has affected the rupee price of commodities in India. Now the shutting-off the demand for silver for minting purposes certainly tends *pro tanto* to lessen the exchange value of silver relative to other commodities—that is, tends to increase the rupee price of commodities, because the material of which the rupee is made is lessened in exchange value. But at the same time the closing of the mints against silver leaves the existing stock of coined rupees a fixed inelastic quantity, so that in the occurrence of any sudden increase in the demand for coin the exchange value of the coin as regards other commodities would go up, and the rupee price of the commodities would go down. That is, the closing of the mints against silver must generally tend to increase the rupee price of commodities in India, subject (in special occurrences of augmented demand for coin) to tendency in the opposite direction. Has a tendency in either direction attributable to the mint closing been observed? And what cause might most probably bring about any such occurrence of augmented demand? The amount of current coin which ordinarily suffices for the wants of a locality is, I imagine, remarkably constant; and when the rayat finds himself reduced to converting the silver ornaments of his women into rupees it is because the produce of the soil, which he would have devoted to the same purpose, has failed him. So that the demand for coin is not materially altered, unless indeed it be lessened, because at such times the number of pecuniary transactions which take place in the community are apt to diminish rather than not."

The London Indian Society has made arrangements for a Conference, at St. Martin's Town Hall, on Monday evening next, which is to be representative of "all the Indians resident in the United Kingdom." The first resolution will be proposed by Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, and seconded by Dr. Sarat Mullick, as follows:—

That fall or rise in exchange does not in itself matter in true international trade, which adjusts itself automatically to the requirements of exchange; that closing the mints or introducing the gold standard does not and cannot save a single farthing to the Indian tax-payers in their remittances for "Home Charges;" that closing the mints and thereby raising the true rupee of about 11d. of gold, to a false rupee of 16d. of gold, is a covert act of exacting 45 per cent. more taxation from the Indian tax-payers, and at the same time of increasing the salaries of officials, and other payments in India by Government to the same extent; that the introduction of gold standard will simply add more to the existing grievous burdens of the tax-payers, to the extent of the cost of the alteration; that the real cause of the terrible evils of poverty, famine, plague, false currency, etc., is what Lord Salisbury truly calls the "bleeding" of India (or, as he says, "India must be bled"), and the "bleeding" is further increased by the fall in exchange or rise in gold; that until this most deplorable "bleeding" of India is stopped there is little chance, if any, of saving India and the British Empire from serious disasters or destruction; and lastly, that the constitution of the present Currency Committee is utterly unsatisfactory, as the suffering Indian tax-payer is not at all represented.

Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt, C.I.E., will move, and Mr. S. Zeauddin A. Balkhi will second, the following resolution:—"That this Meeting condemns the new Sedition Law of India, (1) which makes invidious distinctions between different classes of her Majesty's subjects; (2) which seeks to restrict the free discussion of Indian measures by her Majesty's Indian subjects in England, by threats of prosecution on their return to India; (3) which takes away the liberty of the Press that has been enjoyed in India for over half a century, and substitutes a method of repression unworthy of the British Government; (4) which empowers Magistrates in India, who are heads of the police, to demand security for good behaviour from editors of newspapers, to refuse such security when offered, and to send the editors to gaol with hard labour, without trial for any specific offence; (5) and lastly, which is based on suspicion and distrust against the people, and is thereby calculated to alienate the people and weaken the foundations of the British Empire in the East."

The third resolution will be moved by the Hon. A. M. Bose and seconded by Mr. J. N. Roy: "That this meeting views with deep regret and alarm the introduction of a Bill in the Legislative Council of Bengal to deprive the metropolis of India of the measure of municipal self-government which was conferred on it so far back as 1876 by the Government of the day, after mature deliberation and on competent advice, and which has redounded in every respect to the advantage and improvement of the city, as testified to alike by high and responsible official opinion and by independent evidence. This meeting earnestly appeals to the Government to withdraw, or at least to very greatly modify, a measure which is seriously reactionary in its character, unsatisfactory in its provisions, and calculated to do grave injury to the cause of good administration and municipal progress."

Mr. H. S. Khalil will move, and Mr. Balwant Singh will second, the fourth resolution: "That this Conference regrets the unjust decision of the present Government, charging to the finances of India the whole cost of the late war waged beyond the Indian frontier for Imperial purposes; that in strict justice a fair share of it should have been defrayed from the Imperial Exchequer, as was done in 1881; that in the present instance the injustice done is tantamount to cruelty, considering the disasters and misfortunes from which the people of India have lately suffered."

A correspondent writes:—The Hon. Mrs. Yorke Bevan and Lord Kinnaird have arranged for a ballad concert to take place on June 23 in aid of Indian widows and orphans. The concert is under the patronage of seven members of the royal family and a large number of the aristocracy. Among the artists who have promised their services are Miss Marie Tempest, Hon. M. Henniker, Mme. Gomez, Miss Letty Lind, Messrs. Hayden Coffin, Copland, Douglas Powell, Mercer Adam, Colson, and Hollman. The price of the tickets ranges from one shilling to one guinea. It is intended to form an industrial settlement for widows and orphans left destitute by the plague and famine in one of the populous districts of North-West India, and to extend the women's hospitals at Patna and Benares. The lady doctors exhausted their resources in endeavouring to combat the results of the recent famine and pestilence. Tickets may be had at Chappell's, Tree's, and other offices. The treasurer is Lord Kinnaird, 1, Pall Mall East, and the secretary, Miss O. Bevan, 9, Rutland Gate, S.W.

OFFICIAL INTOLERANCE OF CRITICISM.

Who does not know this temper of the man of the world, that worst enemy of the world? His inexhaustible patience of abuses that only torment others; his apologetic word for beliefs that may perhaps not be so precisely true as one might wish, and institutions that are not altogether so useful as some might think possible; his cordiality towards progress and improvement in a general way, and his coldness or antipathy to each progressive proposal in particular; his pygmy hope that life will one day become somewhat better, punily shivering by the side of his gigantic conviction that it might well be infinitely worse.—Mr. JOHN MORLEY ("Voltaire").

"MY Lords, you are beginning to be found out," said the Duke of Argyll to the peers in the Government on a famous occasion. Lord George Hamilton's career at the India Office has been marked by an unusual series of disastrous blunders, and it is hardly to be expected that he should listen with marked composure to a recital of some of the worst of them. But the unrestrained outburst of ill-temper and irrelevance with which he sought to dispose of Sir William Wedderburn's speech of Tuesday night was the sort of ill-judged and self-defeating performance which one hardly expects from a Cabinet Minister. He could not, if he had tried, have proved more conclusively the case for the amendment. Let us see precisely how the matter stands. The House of Commons is invited to sanction a new East India loan of ten millions sterling. Certain facts and figures—and there is proverbially nothing more misleading than facts except figures—are presented to it, to be swallowed at a gulp, as the justification of the new debt. It happens, not strangely, that these facts and figures represent the roseate official view, which is diametrically opposed to the Indian taxpayer's view, as stated in the able speeches of the Indian members of the Viceroy's Council. "Take it from me," says the Secretary of State in effect, "that all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds." "No;" replies Sir W. Wedderburn, "the duties of a trustee require something a little more thorough than that. Let these distinct issues of fact be sifted by a Select Committee of the House of Commons before we give our assent to the loan." In support of this proposal it was necessary, or at least desirable, to cite previous instances in which official assurances had been proved to be blind guides. There was, for example, the case of Chitral. There was the case of the famine. There was the case of the plague, and the Bombay riots. Even Sir Griffith Evans, in a capital epigram, had remarked the official want of foresight. Citing these instances, Sir W. Wedderburn also indicated their cause—the authorities in India and at the India Office are apt to place too much confidence in flatterers, and to resent information which is unpleasant because it amounts to a criticism of their projects. This, it will be admitted, was a strong case, and it was temperately put. How was Lord George Hamilton to meet it? His best way, of course, was to consent to the appointment of a Select Committee. But, failing that, and failing (as he was bound to fail) to refute the instances of error which had been adduced, he might have shown by his conduct that he at least was willing to hear criticism and take advice. What he actually did was the exact opposite of this. The criticism had touched him on the raw, and he stormed and raved at the critic who had the audacity to "attack and disparage" the mistakes of bureaucracy. The Government of India, Sir William Wedderburn had said, "make it hot for those who tell them disagreeable truths." And by way of negativing the indictment, Lord G. Hamilton made it hot—or, at any rate, as warm as he could—for Sir William Wedderburn.

Lord George Hamilton's outburst was, in the language of the hour, an "object-lesson." It showed plainly enough that, where India is concerned, he claims to be not the servant but the master of the House of Commons. He did not appear to perceive the unseemliness of taking upon himself the task of rebuking and hectoring an independent member for seeking to get the real facts known. The House of Commons does not take kindly to Ministerial arrogance of this kind. But it is, we fancy, beginning to understand the laborious and thankless nature of the duty which Sir W. Wedderburn is endeavouring to discharge. Nor is that all. Mr. Leuty, we are very sure, was not the only member whom Lord George Hamilton's anger provoked into asking, if these things are done in the green tree, what will be done in the dry? If this is the horseplay meted out to a Member of Parliament on the floor of the House of Commons, how does official intolerance of criticism wreak its resentment upon defenceless writers and speakers in distant India? The case of the Natus, the press prosecutions, and the new law of sedition make answer. Lord G. Hamilton, among other reckless assertions, accused Sir W. Wedderburn of attacking the Indian Civil Service. Anger has a bad memory. Sir W. Wedderburn did nothing of the kind. But precisely a week earlier he had joined cordially in the praise which is being awarded without stint to the Civil Service for its good work in mitigating the effects of famine. When Lord G. Hamilton was attacked last year for his rash zeal in the "forward" policy, he sheltered himself behind Lord Elgin. When he is criticised now for his departmental failures, he says that it is the Indian Civil Service which is being disparaged. All this is bad tactics, and we are not sure that it is very worthy conduct. But perhaps Lord G. Hamilton's most signal admission that he had nothing more hopeful to offer than abuse of the plaintiff's attorney was his revival of the stale misrepresentations which gathered a year ago about the troubles at Poona. His attack upon Sir W. Wedderburn for "promulgating calumnies" was as disorderly and irrelevant as it was unfounded. But it afforded Sir William an opportunity of explaining once more, and in a fairly full House, the part which he really played last year. Neither upon the Poona petition, nor upon the specific allegation against British soldiers, did he at any time express any opinion whatever. He merely urged, at a time when the wildest accusations were rife in the jingo press, and innocent and guilty were being confounded in a common punishment, that the complaints of the Poona people ought to be examined. At the same time he was instrumental in bringing together some members of Parliament who had not lost their heads, and some Indian gentlemen who had lately come from India. At this informal conference a grave rumour was mentioned which was not afterwards substantiated. Accordingly Sir W. Wedderburn apologised for having seemed in this indirect way to give currency to a specific accusation which had not been proved. That was the sum and substance of the whole matter. Whether in these circumstances the apology was Quixotic, is a question to which different men may give different answers. But Lord G. Hamilton, who should be the last to complain of it, now taunts Sir W. Wedderburn with having made it. The taunt, no doubt, is damaging. But it is damaging to Lord G. Hamilton alone.

The contention that the questions arising out of the new Loan Bill cannot be adequately discussed with the Speaker in the chair, and ought therefore to be referred to a Select Committee, could hardly have been more clearly illustrated than by the debate of last Tuesday. The Committee, no doubt, will not be appointed. But the loan Bill has not yet become law, and it is well that independent members of the House of Commons should keep on "pegging away" at the facts which lie behind the optimism of officials. Depend upon it, the lesson of Tuesday's debate has not been lost either upon Parliament or upon the great public outside, whose minds and consciences it is the first duty of all who are concerned for the future of India—and of England—to reach.

THE "SPECTATOR" AND THE OVER-POPULATION BOGEY.

THE growth of population in India has long been the last refuge of the Anglo-Indian apologist. Confronted with debt and deficit, over-taxation, the loss of manufactures and the rise of the land-tax, the economic disadvantages of the drain to England, and the growing poverty of India, he has still one defence, which he keeps on repeating like some charm or incantation—the increasing over-population of the country. The *Spectator* has now joined the ranks of the wizards, and last Saturday, in an article on the "The Congestion of India," an article wherein there is much good sense on matters apart from the population question, it repeats the stale and contradictory fallacies to which we have so long been accustomed. How entirely the argument is used as a magic charm, not needing and possibly incapable of proof, may be judged from the suggestion that perhaps population increases or decreases by the operation of some "mysterious law" which has apparently no known relation to antecedents or environment. Also, it is asserted that "there is not the smallest ground, except indeed confidence in the mercy of

God, for believing that the rate can be arrested." Now, as we all have confidence in God's mercy, we may feel assured that the matter is settled, and that, if this be the only serious danger to India, the country is saved. But strangely enough the *Spectator*, in spite of this confidence, proceeds to discuss the question on the other alternative—that the rate of increase cannot be arrested—and to suggest various palliatives. And here we are at once brought face to face with the old fallacy again and again put forward in discussing Indian over-population. The writer, in the passage just quoted, speaks of the *rate*, but except in a calculation that the population will be doubled in 1950, nothing is said about that. All we hear of is the absolute, not the relative, increase, and millions are rolled out with a grand air—mere sound and fury signifying nothing. We are nowhere told the annual or decennial *rate* of increase, which is really the crucial point. How little is proved by considering the density alone, without taking the proportional increase or the surrounding circumstances into consideration, may be judged when it is remembered that the density in Madras is only ·535 of what it is in Bengal, *i.e.*, but little more than half as great, whereas it is in Madras by the admission of all authorities that over-population, if it is to be found anywhere, exists to the most serious extent.

This matter of over-population has already been discussed in a recent number of India (April 1, 1898). It was there shown that the *rate* of increase in British India was much less than in several nations of Europe; that both rate and density were rivalled by Japan; and that the rate of increase was surpassed by some of the most prosperous of the Native States of India. It was shown that, so far as the valley of the Ganges is concerned, though the density is very great, the rate of increase is very small, ·68 per cent. per annum for Bengal, and ·62 for the North-West Provinces; while in some parts of the former the population is actually decreasing. And it was shown that India exports food, or produce that takes up land which otherwise might grow food, far in excess of the imports in use by the mass of the people. But none of these points is noticed by the *Spectator*. It would, we suppose, spoil the success of the incantation to descend to ordinary reasoning. Therefore, we hear nothing of exports without economic return, nothing of the slow growth or even diminution of population in parts of Bengal, nothing of comparisons with other nations. The parts of Bengal where the population has decreased show no advance in prosperity, yet over-population remains the great evil; food is exported, yet population is pressing on the means of subsistence; in several Native States the rate of increase is greater than in the neighbouring Provinces of British India, yet these States show no signs of approaching ruin. Surely here are contradictions that might well make even an enchanter pause.

However, the *Spectator* does not pause, but proceeds to consider ways in which the dire effects of over-population may be rendered a little less crushing. The first is a better distribution of the population by migration to the more thinly peopled districts. Emigration the *Spectator* has to reject; for, in spite of the solidity of the British Empire, its natural and inevitable union which nothing can sever, the ties of affection and interest joining every part, the advantages of a common citizenship, and all the other benefits and glories of which so much is heard, it has nevertheless proved that the Indian subjects of the Queen and Empress find themselves excluded by their fellow-subjects in many quarters of the globe—fellow-subjects, who are not expected to pay for wars beyond their own frontier, still less for those in another continent. To India are allotted the expenses without the privileges of Empire.

To a better distribution of the population, especially as schemes of internal colonisation are discountenanced as likely only to promote suspicion, no objection can be made, nor is the proposal to encourage manufactures likely to evoke opposition, though it is perhaps more difficult than the *Spectator* thinks. It is at least something to have an acknowledgment that the pressure of population has been increased, not by some mysterious law, but by that destruction of native manufactures which has been one of the results of the English occupation, and afterwards by that fiscal policy which was forced upon the Indian government by the clamours of English manufacturers. But it is the third suggestion that is the most important, for under the guise of a palliative for the supposed over-population of India, there are some remarks very pertinent to the present situation. The writer says:

> And the third plan is to readjust taxation so as to make it fall more heavily upon wealth and less heavily upon the poorer classes of the people. India for its wealth is not taxed as yet in a crushing way, but it *is* taxed heavily, and too much of its taxation falls upon the produce of the soil, that is, upon food, with the effect of checking the disposition to take up fresh land, and make the most of that vast estate, the culturable land of the peninsula. Tax successions heavily, especially personality, tax tobacco, tax betel, tax liquor, tax everything that can be done without, and is therefore an adjustable quantity, but tax the peasant as lightly as the necessities of the Treasury will permit. For the last eight years at least this principle, throughout Asia the foundation of prosperity, has been—we fear deliberately—neglected. The idea has been to bring the rupee taken in land-tax up to its old value by increasing assessments, and as the peasant gets no more because the rupee has fallen, he is discouraged and full of care. We say nothing of the dangers arising from his disaffection, which in the Punjab we believe to be serious, but we insist on the truth, known to every careful observer, that throughout Asia if the taxation levied on the peasant is too searching the prosperity of the people at large languishes or decays.

Now to assert that the wealth of India is not heavily taxed is certainly a hazardous proposition. If we take into consideration the vast numbers who are engaged in the actual cultivation of the soil, and the small returns from the income tax, it may well be doubted if there is this great store of lightly-taxed wealth in the country. Moreover, excellent as is the suggestion to raise more of the revenue by taxing luxuries, it must be remembered that there is a point beyond which the taxation of luxuries results, not in an increase of revenue, but in a diminution of consumption, so that, when that point is reached, the community is deprived of an enjoyment with no gain to the exchequer. And in so poor a country as India—poor even if we consider only those who are passing rich—this point is soon reached. But the *Spectator* is undoubtedly right in the view that loss of prosperity follows the over-taxation of the peasant—a fact that is unaffected by over-population, for it is found in thinly-peopled Asiatic countries. Why then is the over-population of India—a theory at once vague and doubtful—dragged in, when here on the *Spectator's* own showing there is an independent cause of the growing poverty of the people?

If the matter is probed a little further it will perhaps be found that the increase of the land-tax, which the *Spectator* so rightly condemns, is not altogether the result of the wrong-headedness of officials who obstinately prefer a bad way of raising the revenue. Whether the wealth of the wealthy in India (in any case small, if we remember the revenue that has to be raised) is lightly taxed or not, it is certain that the taxation of India is enormous when compared with the average income of the inhabitants, and it may be shrewdly suspected that the fondness of the officials for the land tax is due to their knowledge that in no other way can the large sums required be raised without checking consumption and so defeating their own object. Turn the matter about as we will, it remains manifest that the over-taxation of the peasantry kills prosperity, that a great revenue necessitates over-taxation, and that our system of government requires a great revenue. Thus in the end it is not so much official methods of taxation, but the necessity of raising a revenue out of all proportion to the present resources of the country that is the true root of the evil. If it be added that a great part of this revenue is spent out of India, and that, as a consequence, there results a constant economic drain on the resources of that country, what need is there to introduce over-population as the great danger? When the most expensive government in the world, and a drain amounting in some years to over Rx. 30,000,000 per annum, for which no economic return is obtained, are bleeding the country to death, what need is there to speculate on the possible effects of over-population in 1950? Is it not like speculating on the dangers of a flood in the midst of a conflagration? But if it is asserted that, independently of these causes of poverty, over-population is a present danger, it may well be asked how the population can be said to press on the means of subsistence when food, and produce grown in the place of food, are yearly exported in order to satisfy the drain on India, and to endow that country with its terribly expensive Government. That the country is able to support such an expenditure and to indulge in such official luxuries is a proof that the margin of subsistence has not been reached.

INDIA UNDER HOME RULE.

By E. H. Pickersgill, M.P.

All persons interested in India who have read such of the official minutes of Sir Henry Maine as are appended to his "Life and Speeches," which was published under the editorship of Mr. Grant Duff in 1892, will have had their appetite whetted for more. This observation specially applies to the minutes upon the subject of the system which regulates the relations between the British Government and the Protected States of India. At a recent meeting commemorative of Sir Henry Maine, weighty tribute was paid by several speakers to his work in this field. It was stated that he had helped to found the existing system by the judicious application of rules drawn from International Law, and that his luminous ideas and conceptions had made clear and intelligible what before seemed obscure or capricious. In these circumstances I think that general regret will be felt at the reply which I received to a question put by me to the Secretary of State for India a few weeks ago. Lord George Hamilton stated that in his judgment the unpublished minutes of Sir Henry Maine upon this subject are either unimportant, or too confidential to be given to the world.

Before I proceed further it may be worth while to take a very rapid survey of the extent and character of the Protected States. These territories, then, comprise in the aggregate an area of nearly 600,000 square miles, with a population of 66 millions; as against an area of one million square miles and a population of 221 millions in British India. There are no fewer than 650 separate States, ranging in importance from Hyderabad, which is as large as the kingdom of Italy, to the petty chiefship of a single village—of which latter class there are many examples in Kathiawar and elsewhere. In all respects these States show a most confusing variety. India, the home of immemorial despotism, is the home also of such democratic institutions as the panchâyat, and the fully organised village community; while in some few Pathan tribes, as Mr. Tupper tells us, there is in vogue a system very like our own party government, the leading men of one faction directing affairs for a time, and then being turned out to make room for the leading men of the other faction. Again, the Rajput States, according to Sir Frederick Pollock, are living in the late Middle Ages, while a good deal of the North-West is still enveloped in the Mogul period of the 16th century. As Mr. Lee-Warner has said of these Protected States, not less truly than picturesquely, "In the first quarter of this century they present the appearance of *a sea suddenly petrified while in a condition of stormy unrest and disquiet*." In these circumstances it will be easily understood that the relations between the British Government and the Protected States are (as Lord Lytton once said, with a *soupçon* of characteristic cynicism and irony) free from "vulgar compactness."

It is all-important, however, to observe that the relation of the British Government to the protected States, peculiar as it is, is not an exotic transplanted from the West. On the contrary, it is a native growth, corresponding to the immemorial tendency of Indian rajas to range themselves, whether by compulsion or otherwise, under the hegemony of some paramount power. "The framework of our present political system is an inheritance from the Moguls." Some striking illustrations of this general proposition may be cited. In the early years of the present century the Rajput States repeatedly applied for the aid of the British Government against the Mahrattas and the free companies. Upon one of these occasions Sir Charles Metcalfe, the Resident at Delhi, wrote as follows in a despatch under date June 20, 1816: "People do not scruple to assert that they have a right to the protection of the British Government. They say that there has always existed in India some power to which peaceable States submitted, and in return obtained its protection; that the British Government now occupies the place of the great protecting Power." Again, as late as 1803 the Nizam of Hyderabad obtained the confirmation of the Emperor of Delhi to his accession to rule in the Deccan on the death of Nizam Ali. And lastly, Mr. Lee-Warner points out that it was not until the institution in 1861 of the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India by the Queen that the empire of Delhi's titles ceased to possess a value, and the favours of the Sovereign of Great Britain and Ireland were eagerly sought after.

The history of the relations between the British Government and the Indian princes may be divided broadly into two periods: the period of "non-intervention" and the period of "union." The cases of Coorg and Oudh furnish good illustrations of the former period. The Raja of Coorg having gone from bad to worse, and having been guilty both of scandalous misrule and of gross insult to the British Government, the Governor-General "borrowed from the armoury of international law its last appeal." War was declared on March 15, 1834, the Raja surrendered, and his country was annexed. Thus, as Mr. Lee-Warner well says, "Coorg, which received the rights of war, also suffered the penalities of international law." Take again the case of Oudh. The proper course, according to present practice, would have been to set the king on one side for a season, and to have reformed the administration for him. But such a proceeding would have shocked the scruples of officers who were pedantic students of international law, and thus recognised no possible half-way house between absolute non-interference in the affairs of Indian States, and the complete incorporation of them in British territory.

The period of non-intervention has been succeeded by a period of union. This new relationship was sealed by Mr. Disraeli's Royal Titles Act. As Lord Lytton declared at Delhi on New Year's Day, 1877, to an assemblage of princes and potentates such probably as was never gathered round the emperor in the brightest days of the Mogul dynasty, the Imperial addition to the titles of the Crown was to be "henceforth to all the princes and peoples of India the permanent symbol of its union with their interests." It is important, however, to note that Mr. Disraeli's Act and Lord Lytton's declaration did not create a new order of things: they only emphasised existing facts in the manner most likely to impress the oriental imagination. Looking back across more than twenty years, I remember that I was a somewhat blatant opponent of Mr. Disraeli's Bill. As against the use of the Imperial title in the United Kingdom many weighty arguments might be urged; and it should not be forgotten that solemn assurances upon this point were given in Parliament, which have been grossly violated. But as regards our Imperial position in India Mr. Disraeli's Bill was, I believe now, a wise measure; and the opposition to it was largely due to that "sheer ignorance" of India, its conditions, character, and feeling, which is so discreditable to our public men.

This note, struck by Lord Lytton at Delhi, of the new obligations arising from union has been repeatedly re-echoed by the British Government in recent years. For example, in the Secretary of State's despatch, July, 1891, relating to the Manipur case, interference is justified partly

> in the interests of the British Government, which has of late years been brought into much closer relations with the State and its subject tribes than was formerly the case, and cannot safely tolerate disorders therein.

The case which seems to mark the transition from the "non-intervention" period to the "union" period was that of the Kathiawar States, and on that occasion Sir Henry Maine played a very conspicuous and characteristic part. In 1864 these States had fallen into an almost anarchical condition, and the majority of the members of the Viceroy's Council, recognising the necessity for interference, but still dominated by the pedantry of International law, were driven to assert the paradox that these States, though admittedly they were not subject to British law, were yet British territory. Sir Henry Maine vigorously attacked this position, maintaining that the States were foreign territory; but he justified interference even on the basis of international relations.

> If (he wrote) a group of little independent States in the middle of Europe were hasting to utter anarchy, as the Kathiawar States are hasting, the Greater Powers would never hesitate to interfere for their settlement and pacification in spite of their theoretical independence.

And then he added:—

> One of the many difficulties attending the application of international law in India arises from the circumstance that the whole system of the law of nations was framed by its authors subject to the contingency of occasional war. The British Government has prevented the Kathiawar States from going to war among themselves, and hence has arrested the operation of a natural process by which the endless subdivision of the chiefships occasioned by the law of succession would have been corrected or counteracted.

A similar line of argument has since been repeatedly followed by the Government of India. For instance, in the very last case of the deposition of an Indian prince—namely, that of the Rájá of Jhalawar in 1896—the Government of India in their despatch to the Secretary of State justify their action in part on the following grounds:—

It must not be forgotten that it is to the paramount power alone that the inhabitants of a Native State can look for protection against misgovernment. The chiefs no longer have to fear the revolutionary outbreaks which were of old the remedy for tyranny and oppression, but which could not be tolerated in any part of the dominions of the Queen-Empress. Thus it has become the duty of the Government of India to interfere when any chief persists in a course of action which is in contravention of his engagement, or of his position as a feudatory of the Crown. Misrule on the part of a government which is upheld by the British power is misrule in the responsibility for which the British Government becomes in a measure involved. It becomes, therefore, not only the right, but the positive duty of the British Government to see that the administration of a State in such a condition is reformed, and that gross abuses are removed.

It may be stated here that an obligation to concede the same toleration which her Majesty's Proclamation has guaranteed to her Indian subjects rests upon the protected chiefs. Thus the Marquis of Ripon interfered to secure religious toleration for some Canadian missionaries in the State of Indore.

Sir Henry Maine's minute on the Kathiawar States was, however, chiefly remarkable for the famous enunciation which it contained of the doctrine of "the divisibility of sovereignty." The extreme importance of this doctrine in its bearing upon our relations with the protected States will easily be seen. The Crown and Parliament had undertaken to treat these States as sovereign States. But if sovereignty was one and indivisible (as Austin had lately taught, and indeed made the proposition almost the keystone of his system), then the most casual glance at the actual position of the protected States showed that they were not sovereign. To this difficulty Maine addressed himself with characteristic vigour.

Indivisibility of sovereignty (he maintained), though it belongs to Austin's system, does not belong to international law. The powers of sovereigns are a bundle or collection of powers, and they may be separated one from another. As a matter of fact, nearly all the modern writers on international law do divide the rights flowing from the sovereignty of States into groups. Thus a ruler may administer civil and criminal justice, may make laws for his subjects and for his territory, may exercise power over life and death, and may levy taxes and dues; but nevertheless he may be debarred from making war and peace, and from having foreign relations with any authority outside his territory. This, in point of fact, is the exact condition of the Indian Princes.

By way of historical illustration Sir Henry Maine further pointed out that Europe was once full of imperfectly sovereign States, though the current of events has for centuries set towards their aggregation into large independent monarchies, and he added that we have modern examples in the protectorates which Germany, France, Italy, and Spain have established in the Australasian seas and on the coast of Africa.

It is only right to indicate here that all authorities on international law do not accept the general proposition thus laid down by Sir Henry Maine. For instance, Dr. Woolsey maintains that

for the purposes of international law that State only can be regarded as sovereign which has retained its power to enter into all relations with foreign States, whatever limitations it may impose on itself in other respects.

It seems to me, however, that M. Despagnet, in his recent admirable *Essai sur les Protectorats*, takes a more correct view in the following passage, which I have roughly translated:—

International law, the province of which is to regulate all the possible relations between States, cannot refuse to recognise those relations which are inevitably (*fatalement*) established by virtue of the power and right of States to fix their condition as they desire, and to restrain, *e.g.*, their liberty of action by subordinating it to the authority and control of another State.

Possibly, however, a stronger objection to Sir Henry Maine's views presents itself if we peruse some of our treaties with these protected princes. Take, for example, the instrument subject to which Lord Ripon in 1881 effected the rendition of Mysore. It is the only instance, I believe, in which an attempt has been made to embody all obligations in a single document, and it may probably be taken as a type of the obligations of the Indian States generally. According to this instrument, all laws in force are to be maintained, settlements of land revenue are not to be interfered with, no material change in administration is to be made, and the Mahárájá is at all times to conform to such advice as the Governor-General in Council may offer him with a view to the management of his finances, the settlement and collection of his revenues, the imposition of taxes, the administration of justice, the extension of commerce, the encouragement of trade, agriculture, and industry, and any other objects connected with the advancement of His Highness's interests, the happiness of his subjects, and his relations to the British Government. One might be disposed to ask after reading this instrument what single right in the whole bundle (adopting Maine's language) is left to the free disposal of the Mahárájá? There can be no doubt, however, that some States do in practice enjoy a substantial immunity from interference in their internal administration, although at the same time our relations with them imply the reserve on the part of the British Government of a certain dominant "residuary jurisdiction." Mr. Hall goes so far as to say that "from the moment that the Queen was proclaimed Empress of India the sovereign powers which Indian princes enjoyed, and enjoy, ceased to be relics of their independence—they were kept by sufferance and delegation."

It may be worth while to point out that so late as 1861 Parliament in the Indian Councils Act of that year described the Indian Protectorates as Princes and States "in alliance with her Majesty," but in the Interpretation Act, 1889, they are described as "Native Princes or Chiefs under the Suzerainty of her Majesty." Further, the case of Manipur established the principle that both rulers and their subjects owe allegiance to her Majesty, and can commit the crime of murdering British subjects, for which they will be tried by a British Court. Upon that occasion the Government of India published in the Official Gazette, under date August 21, 1891, the following notification:—

The principles of international law have no bearing upon the relations between the Government of India as representing the Queen-Empress on the one hand, and the Native States under the suzerainty of her Majesty on the other. The paramount supremacy of the former presupposes and implies the subordination of the latter.

In these circumstances the question may perhaps suggest itself, what was the value of the work done by Sir Henry Maine to which attention has been called in this article? To that question a brief, but I think conclusive, answer may be given. Of course extraordinary occasions will require, as they will certainly receive, extraordinary remedies. In such cases, as Mr. Lee-Warner has said:—

The Government of India interferes with authority by virtue of its paramount powers, and it does not cloak its intervention, or weaken its authority, by straining legal ties, or misapplying legal phrases which were devised for a totally different set of conditions.

But, such extraordinary occasions apart, to have reduced to something like a coherent system the relations between the British Government and the protected princes was a service to both parties, the value of which it would be difficult to exaggerate. It has been said that "if the duties of the protected princes are extensive, the limitations upon the interference of the British Government are severe." Towards making those limitations effective, no one, I believe, has contributed more largely or more brilliantly than Sir Henry Maine.

A LITERARY HISTORY OF INDIA.[1]

NOT a history of Indian literature, it is to be observed, but something of wider and deeper interest: the history of the nation as it is reflected and interpreted in its literature. There is no better point of view for the study of the literature itself. "He who will understand the poet must go into the poet's land," as Goethe wrote in the fine couplet which Mr. Frazer has appropriately taken for his motto: to understand the literature we must understand the life and thought of those by whom and for whom it was produced. No one who is acquainted with Mr. Frazer's previous writings would doubt his competence for the task he has undertaken. He has qualified himself for that task not only by a patient and laborious study of Indian literature and of the writings of archæologists, but, what is of even greater importance, by ceaseless effort to enter into the oriental spirit and describe its workings from the inside. Indeed—and this is the only ungracious criticism that needs to be passed upon his work—the sense of the deep inner significance of his

[1] "A Literary History of India." By R. W. Frazer, LL.B. London: T. Fisher Unwin.

subject is perhaps too much with him. We are haunted continually by the brooding shadow of Eastern fatalism. The effect is impressive, but the monotony is a little wearisome. It would be a relief to his readers if he would more often condescend to the humbler functions of the historian, and give us simple and unadorned narrative, free for the moment from both poetry and mysticism.

Mr. Frazer begins with the invasion of India by the Aryans, not attempting to decide between the conflicting theories as to their original home, but inclining to the view that it was somewhere in Europe. As the mists of early dawn clear away the Aryans are revealed, in the first Vedic hymns, "entering through the north-west passes in well-organised tribes, holding their popular assemblies, led by renowned chieftains or kings, honouring their bards and priests, free from social distinctions, and possessing many of the arts and refinements of civilisation." Of the beauty, majesty, and deep feeling of the Vedic hymns Mr. Frazer writes with intense enthusiasm, whilst despairing of the attempt to reproduce them in a Western language. Of the Gāyatrī, for instance, he says that "it has its form in its sound, and therefore remains untranslatable in words," but "once heard in the land of its own birth, once learned from the lips of those whose proudest boast is that they can trace back their descent from the poets who first caught the music which it holds in every syllable, it rings for ever after as India's noblest tribute to the Divine, as an acknowledgment of submissive resignation to the decrees which bid man keep his soul in patience until the day dawns when all things shall be revealed."

Succeeding chapters trace the growth of Brahmanism, the development of the sacrificial system, the multiplication of deities. From this point "the history of India, as preserved in its literature, is one unending struggle of the Brahmanic power to assert its supremacy and to promulgate far and wide the ordinances it laid claim to formulate under Divine sanction." Next, Mr. Frazer has to attempt to find, under the mass of legends that have grown up round his name, the historic personality of Buddha as he lived and taught—probably in the sixth century B.C. "The earliest burial mounds erected to his memory, and temples wherein his sayings were recited, show plainly that the whole system is free from superstition, idolatry, or the worship of Buddha as a divine being to whom miraculous or supernatural powers were ascribed." But "the whole future history of Buddhism in India is the history of the receding of the wave of thought that in the sixth century B.C. had reached its culminating point." This retrograde movement was due to the influence of Brahmanism. The growth of the caste system was in direct opposition to the teaching of Buddha, who had striven to break down barriers of race, but it was the bulwark which the Aryan built round himself to ward off decay. "Down to the present day the Aryan has preserved much of his heritage from being entombed in the structure he has raised, and the great problem for England to face is whether she has brought aid to the beleaguered camp in time to infuse it with new life. If England has not succeeded in warming into vitality the latent spirit of Aryanism, in spreading new hope amid the cultured classes of India, that they may come out from their caste restrictions to aid her without fear of defeat in the crusade against superstition and ignorance, her mission is a failure and her past in the East must inevitably be entombed in the same grave as that over which she found Aryanism hovering on her advent into India."

After a chapter on "The Final Resting-place of Aryan Thought," by which Mr. Frazer means the systems of the Vedanta, we come to the great epics compiled by Brahmans to embody and give priestly recognition to floating popular traditions. After this is told the story of King Asoka's attempt to govern India in accordance with the ideals of Buddhism, and its failure. In this chapter Mr. Frazer refers several times to the Chinese traveller, Hiouen Tsang, who visited India in the seventh century of the Christian era; but he makes no use of the valuable record of the Buddhist schools in India in that century compiled by another Chinese traveller, I-Tsing, and lately translated into English by a Japanese scholar, and published by the Clarendon Press. A full account follows of the great literary dramas. Then Mr. Frazer turns aside from the main stream of Indian literature, from the history of Aryan thought, to review the Dravidian literature of the aboriginal inhabitants of Southern India. He writes with enthusiastic appreciation of the beauty and spiritual depth of the best religious poems in the Tamil language, quoting freely from Dr. Pope's felicitous translations. The next chapter, "The Foreigner in the Land," tells the story of the Mahometan invasion, the defeat of Buddhism, the successful resistance in scattered places of Brahmanism. The epic of Tulsi Das, "The Sea of Wanderings of Rama," is commemorated as an abiding landmark in the literary history of North India, and as having "saved the people by the influence of its chastened style and purity of sentiment and thought from falling into the depths of that lewdness and obscenity towards which the realistic rendering of the mystic and spiritual loves of Radha and Krishna was ever tending."

The final chapter, which deals with Indian literature since the English conquest and with future possibilities, is the most interesting of all. What has been, or will be, the effect upon India of the invasion of Western ideals and methods of thought? "The world presents no problem more interesting or more momentous. On its solution depends in history the final judgment on the success of England's mission in the East." For himself, Mr. Frazer has no doubt that the East will slowly assimilate all brought to it by the West that is good for its own purposes, rejecting with unfailing instinct all that it perceives to be "antagonistic to the conditions whereby it has its own existence." The impact of the West upon the East, the fusion of old and new, is traced in the careers and writings of Ram Mohun Roy, Keshab Chandar Sen, Bankim Chandra Chatterji, the Dutt family, Judge Telang, and others. Among the novelists, Bankim Chandra is applauded as "the first great creative genius" of modern India, and Mr. Romesh Chandra Dutt is described as his worthy successor. We cannot more fittingly conclude this notice than by echoing Mr. Frazer's appeal to Mr. Dutt, who has hitherto resisted all such entreaties, to translate his novels from the Bengali into English, to the great benefit of Western students of Indian life and thought.

OUR LONDON LETTER.

(FROM A PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.)

LAST Friday's foreign policy debate in the House of Commons would have been remarkable even in an exciting Session, and coming as it did at the end of one of the most dull weeks of a jog-trot Session, it naturally stands out prominently. It is not important, perhaps, because of any new facts which were elicited, but because of the personal rivalries and passions which were aroused. The debate was opened by Sir Charles Dilke, who attacked Lord Salisbury's policy with regard to Crete, China, West Africa, Burmah, Siam, Abyssinia, Tunis, Madagascar, Newfoundland, Zanzibar, and America. No one has a greater admiration than I for Sir Charles's marvellous store of information on the affairs of the whole world. Moreover, in this vast survey, lasting an hour and a quarter, he gave reasons for the faith that is in him all the way through. But the average member is very human, and a speech like that of Sir Charles Dilke's bewilders him. There is no doubt that it made not half the effect that it ought to have made upon the House.

As if to make its unweildly length the more apparent, it was followed (after a short interval of clowning by Admiral Field) by a telling, nay, a superbly effective speech of about twenty minutes duration by Mr. Asquith. When a man makes a great hit there is always the temptation to those who are listening to say it is his best speech. The impression of previous efforts has faded; the effect of this is vivid. But making allowances for that, I think there is no doubt that Mr. Asquith's short attack on Friday last was by far the best thing he has done in the House. It appeared to be impromptu throughout. It really turned Mr. Chamberlain inside out, and yet there was not a touch of personality. In a most telling manner he contrasted the utterances of Lord Salisbury and Mr. Chamberlain, and asked again and again, as their differences were revealed, "Which is the authorised version?" With indignant and really eloquent scorn he protested against our touting for alliances up and down the highways and byeways of Europe. Mr. Chamberlain knows a good speech when he hears it, and his face was white with

anger when he received this merciless castigation. There was no front bench verbiage. It was a succession of knock-down blows delivered with a scornful self-possession that contrasted with the restless anger of the recipient.

I am not sure, however, that Mr. Chamberlain was not more sorely wounded in the house of his friends than by his enemies. For if ever that old tag about a strange thing happening may be used, it may be in connexion with Mr. Curzon's speech which followed Mr. Asquith's. The Under-Secretary, with the utmost coolness, declared that all this attack on the Colonial Secretary did not concern the Foreign Office. Mr. Chamberlain was there; he could speak for himself! Was ever such a position taken up before by a Government? A leading member of the Cabinet makes an important—nay, a sensational—speech in the country about our foreign policy. When the Foreign Secretary is asked what he thinks of it, he says he has not a copy by him; when the Under-Secretary is asked he says it has nothing to do with the Foreign Office, and practically adds, in the words of Scripture, "he is of age, ask him." And then Mr. Curzon slipped away to reply more or less to Sir Charles Dilke's attack. I never remember anything like this "dropping" of Mr. Chamberlain. He is not a man who easily shows feeling, but I could see that he was anything but happy, and I knew from experience that he would slash out furiously when he got the chance.

Before that chance came he had to listen to some unpleasant taunts from his own side. Mr. Maclean raised huge laughter by sneering at that picture we all know of Mr. Chamberlain sitting in the midst of a group of standing Colonial Premiers—"as good as 'Alexander's Feast'," said Mr. Maclean. Another Tory, Mr. Legh, exclaimed pathetically, "If our Ministers must make foreign policy speeches in the country, in Heaven's name let them say the same thing;" while Mr. Yerburgh announced his intention of voting against the Government. But everyone was waiting for Sir William Harcourt, and then for the object of all these attacks, Mr. Chamberlain. Sir William was remarkably effective, the more so because he indulged in humorous scorn rather than denunciation. "After all, the Prime Minister is someone," he exclaimed, "and as he is also Foreign Secretary, we cannot afford to ignore him on an occasion of this sort." Again: "When we ask the Foreign Secretary what he thinks of the Birmingham speech he replies he has not a copy with him; when we ask the Under-Secretary he replies it has nothing to do with the Foreign Office. It is well to know that the Colonial speeches on foreign affairs have nothing to do with the War Office." Another Harcourtian dictum was: "I no more affect the new diplomacy than I do the new woman." And he was very amusing in explaining that foreign nations had been unduly fluttered by Mr. Chamberlain's speech. "They don't understand our institutions," he said, "or they would know how large a part is played by unauthorised programmes." It was an excellent speech, and especially excellent being delivered just before Mr. Chamberlain was to rise. He sat dabbing notes on a piece of paper viciously, as if eager to be up and at it.

At length his chance came, and his jump to the table was the signal for cheers—yes, and for some hisses! Only once before have I heard hisses in the House, and that was on the memorable night when the strangers hissed the members generally who were engaged in fighting on the floor. On Friday I could not locate the hisses. I see that some accounts say they came from the Nationalist benches. It struck me they came from some of the fierce young bloods of the Tory party, but I cannot be sure. Leaving that, however, let me come to Mr. Chamberlain. He was more than angry, he was furious, and some of his jeers, while effective in a way, show that he has not risen above the style of a mere debating society. Take this for instance; turning quickly to Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Chamberlain exclaimed "Well, we don't all write our speeches." Could anything be more illustrative of the style known as "no class"? And even if it had been polished it would have been foolish, coming from a man accused of making an unwise speech, for the obvious retort is "It's a pity you don't." Then what can be made of this as a proof of the solidarity of the Government: "I have not resigned, and Lord Salisbury has not resigned, therefore we are united." It was so poor that even Mr. Chamberlain could see it had not taken effect. Another broad sneer was the only thing to get the Tories to cheer, so he snapped out: "Well, I've heard of a Government in which the Prime Minister and his chief supporter were not on speaking terms." How some of the Tories shouted!

But the most significant jibe was aimed not at his enemies, but at that "noble friend" with whom he would have us believe he is on terms of such close friendship. He was advancing some argument when Mr. John Morley intervened with a reference to Lord Salisbury's speech. Mr. Chamberlain paused a moment, and then, with an almost venomous smile, he said very deliberately, "I'm sorry I have not a copy of the Prime Minister's speech by me." Instantly there came a thunderclap of cheers and laughter, repeated again and again from the Liberals. The Tories sat silent. That one sneer, apparently deliberate, was a reply to all the laboured sophistications about not having resigned, and therefore being on good terms with the Premier. It was as if a search-light had suddenly been flashed on a dark spot. As the man in the street would say, "there's evidently no love lost between Joseph and his noble leader."

These hits, coarse and unpolished as they were, formed the best part of his speech. After he had finished with that style and attempted to defend his Birmingham utterances, he became feeble and even boring. And at the conclusion, when he tried to wax enthusiastic about the beauties of an Anglo-American alliance, he foamed at the mouth with love of humanity and hatred of the Irish. Somehow one does not take to the notion of Mr. Chamberlain supporting a movement in the interests of peace and goodwill. It is not exactly in his line. The effect of the speech was, of course, to make it absolutely certain that there is a rift in the Government lute. It was difficult before to suppose that the Colonial and the Foreign Secretaries thought alike. It is impossible now.

Apart from that big night there has been little. Four of the officers who forfeited their commissions by taking part in the Jameson Raid will, as announced in the Lords, have those commissions restored; but Sir John Willoughby and Colonel Rhodes will not. In the Commons two good things have been done. An attempt of the monopolists to prevent the competition of local authorities with electric light companies was well beaten on Tuesday, and the second reading of the London University Bill was carried without a division. But the talk has been all the time about Mr. Chamberlain and his "friends"—if any, I may add. He has a few retainers, members of what Tim Healy once called the retinue, but of friends not many.

CHRONICLE OF THE WEEK.

Thursday, June 9.—It was reported from Peking that by a convention signed to-day, Great Britain leased certain territories on the mainland opposite Hong-kong, and all the waters of Mirs Bay and Deep Bay, China retaining the right to use the waters for her ships. The lease was for ninety-nine years. Japan had notified China that she required settlements for the exclusive use of Japanese at Fu-chau, Wu-sung, Sha-shi, Fu-ning, Yo-chau, and Ching-wan-tas, and also an indemnity of £15,000 for damage sustained by Japanese property in the Sha-shi riots.

Positive reports were published in the United States respecting the despatch of a large force in transports from Tampa for Cuba; but sober observers were disposed to suspend judgment as to their accuracy. A telegram from Cape Haytien asserted that on Tuesday five American warships bombarded the fortifications of Caimamera, to the east of Santiago, and drove out the garrison.—The telegram from the Governor-General of the Philippines, describing the critical situation there, which was made public in Madrid on Wednesday, produced a profound and painful impression, and led to an animated discussion in the Chamber, in the course of which the Government was sharply criticised by members of all parties, and Señor Sagasta denied that Ministers were responsible for the misfortunes in the Philippines, which they had not the means of averting.

M. Paul Deschanel was definitely elected President of the French Chamber of Deputies by 287 votes against 277 recorded for M. Brisson.

Friday, June 10.—The only news of importance from Cuba was that two vessels of Rear-Admiral Sampson's squadron had taken possession of the outer bay of Guantanamo, about forty miles east of Santiago. The House of Representatives in Washington late on Thursday night passed the conference report on the War Revenue Bill, which provided for the coinage of 1,500,000 silver dollars per month.—The bad news from the Philippines continued to be the great theme of discussion in Madrid. The general feeling was in favour of the immediate

despatch of reinforcements, and in deference to this feeling the Minister of Marine had been sent to Cadiz to report on the condition of Admiral Camara's fleet.—The Spanish Premier declared that his Government had no intention of taking the initiative in negotiations for peace, and had no knowledge that any other Power was disposed to do so.

The rising in Ferghana, which had now been "completely suppressed," was said to have been due to the intrigues of the Mahometan priesthood, who were acting in secret understanding with certain "high circles" in Constantinople.

A meeting was held yesterday in support of the Indian Heroes' Fund in St. James's Hall, Mr. W. F. D. Smith, M.P., in the chair. Lord Roberts, the president of the fund, explained its purpose—to provide for native Indian soldiers invalided or disabled in the British service, and to relieve the families of those who lost their lives in that service. He paid a warm tribute to the courage, devotion, and loyalty of the Native troops. The Duke of Cambridge, Lord George Hamilton, Lord Lansdowne, General Sir W. Lockhart, General Sir Hugh Gough, and Lord Methuen also spoke in support of the establishment of the fund.

SATURDAY, June 11.—It was now positively stated that a force of 600 American marines landed on Friday at Guantanamo, hoisted the American flag, and took possession of the earthworks and other fortifications, from which the Spaniards had been driven on the previous day by the fire of the "Oregon" and "Marblehead." The main fort of the place was at the time of the latest despatches from Guantanamo still in the hands of the Spaniards, but its capture was expected by the American officers to be an easy matter. Rear-Admiral Sampson, it was stated, now had a good harbour and base of supplies on the south side of Cuba, at which it would be easy to land the troops.—A brief reference to the American occupation of Guantanamo was made in an official despatch from General Blanco, received in Madrid to-day.—Rear-Admiral Sampson had opened active communications with the Cuban insurgents in the vicinity of Santiago, and had furnished them with large supplies of arms and ammunition.—The rebel leader Maximo Gomez had written to General Blanco, refusing to come to any agreement with the Spaniards.—The critical situation in the Philippines continued to engage attention in Madrid, and was the subject of a debate in the Spanish Senate yesterday, when General Primo de Rivera, ex-Governor-General of the islands, offered a long defence of his policy.

SUNDAY, June 12.—A Havas telegram from London, published in Paris, asserted that at its last sitting the Anglo-French Commission on the Niger question came to a complete understanding on the points still remaining for solution. Niki was to belong to France, and Bussa and Bere to Great Britain. France would retain Bona, but England would obtain in favour of her Sokoto possessions a zone of sixty miles. The questions of navigation on the Niger and of tariffs were also definitely settled.

MONDAY, June 13.—Mr. M. Fowler, the Liberal member for the City of Durham, died at his residence in that city. He was born in 1845.

It was reported that the force of American marines which landed at Guantanamo on Friday was attacked on Saturday afternoon by a number of Spanish regular troops, and fighting went on fitfully throughout the night. The Spaniards were eventually repulsed, with a loss to the Americans of four killed and one wounded.—It was officially announced in Washington that Major-General Shafter had sailed from Key West early in the morning with 15,000 men, mostly regular troops. The situation at Guantanamo was said to cause some anxiety in Washington, although it was regarded as certain that Major-General Shafter's force, which was to reach Guantanamo on Thursday, would be on the spot before Spanish reinforcements could possibly arrive from Havana.—In Madrid it was believed that the impending combined attack of the Americans and insurgents on Santiago would prove a much more difficult operation than was commonly supposed. It was stated that on the arrival of the German battleship "Kaiser" at Cavite there would be four German ships of war in that neighbourhood, and that, including reinforcements despatched on June 1, Germany would be represented in the Philippines by 3,000 seamen and marines.

TUESDAY, June 14.—From Peking some highly interesting particulars were reported regarding Russian activity in China, which was described as increasing. Through the instrumentality of Belgian concessionaires and the Russo-Chinese Bank the Russians were endeavouring to obtain control of as many projects of railway construction as possible.

Lord Salisbury, who was accompanied by Mr. Curzon, received at the Foreign Office a deputation desirous of laying before him their views on the prospects of British trade in China, with special reference to the claims on that country recently made by France, Germany, and Russia. In his reply the Prime Minister declined to discuss the present relations between the nations named and China, but admitted that their policy of high protection was calamitous to the trade of Great Britain. In developing the unappropriated places of the earth—places, that was, unappropriated by the European Powers—he looked to the employment of private enterprise.

A despatch from Rear-Admiral Sampson was published by the Navy Department in Washington, stating that the result of explorations made by a lieutenant in Santiago harbour was to show that all the vessels of Admiral Cervera's fleet were there. Rear-Admiral Sampson also confirmed the reports, already published, of the fighting at Guantanamo.—In Madrid the war news was very contradictory, and the fact of the landing of American troops at Guantanamo was denied.—The concentration of German naval force in the Philippines was regarded by several of the Berlin journals as indicating an intention on the part of Germany to intervene in certain eventualities; and strong hopes in the same direction were expressed in the Madrid Press.

WEDNESDAY, June 15.—Further fighting was reported to have taken place at Guantanamo on Tuesday. In the early morning a body of Spaniards succeeded in approaching the camp held by the American marines, but were then discovered, and repulsed after a good deal of firing. Afterwards, it was stated, the Americans, in co-operation with a number of Cuban insurgents, took the offensive and attacked and captured a Spanish post some miles from the camp, routing the defenders with an estimated loss to the latter of 40 killed.—There was still some anxiety in Washington lest the Spaniards should attack in force the marines at Guantanamo before the arrival of the troops now *en route* from Tampa.—The concentration of German ships in the neighbourhood of Manila was said to have aroused some apprehension in Washington with regard to the intentions of the German Government, but the Embassy there repudiated any purpose other than that of protecting German subjects in the event of an attack on Manila.

The text of the Anglo-French Convention on the Niger and adjoining districts, which was signed in Paris on Tuesday night, was published.

THE COMMITTEE ON CURRENCY.

The following memorial, signed by a number of manufacturers, merchants, shippers, etc., of Glasgow and the West of Scotland, has been forwarded to the Secretary of State for India:—

To the Right Honourable the Lord George Hamilton, M.P., her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London.

May it please your Lordship,—We, the undersigned merchants, shipowners, manufacturers, dyers, and printers carrying on business in Glasgow and the West of Scotland for the Indian Empire and the East generally, beg, in view of the committee of enquiry relative to Indian currency recently appointed by your lordship, respectfully to submit:—

First.—That the question of the currency of India is of vital importance to that great dependency, alike to the well being of its millions of inhabitants and the solvency of its Government.

Second.—That the money question in India is inter-related with the standard of value and currency of Great Britain and the civilised world.

Third.—That the question is so vast, as well as so intricate in its many ramifications, that it calls for the service of the best informed specialists and practical men of this Empire acting with freedom, with power to summon full evidence, and having due time given for consideration, to report upon what action should be taken by the Governments, alike of this country and of India.

Fourth.—That ample time should be given for the public to consider any proposals put forward before they are passed into law.

In our opinion, the committee of enquiry appointed by your lordship does not meet the position we have submitted in the respects that—

(*a*) The gentlemen already named on the Committee—with one or two exceptions—are not known to the public as well qualified for the duties entrusted to them.

(*b*) The Committee consists of six officials (or ex-officials) of Government. The secretary appointed is also a Treasury official, and there are only five other members. This surely gives undue preponderance to official representation in an enquiry into Governmental proposals.

(*c*) There is an absence of the names of statesmen, merchants, and bankers, who are publicly recognised as *facile principes* in monetary science.

In the circumstances indicated, the Committee named must fail to command public confidence.

For the reasons indicated above, we are of opinion that the monetary question is obviously one for the Imperial Government of Great Britain to take up and deal with. It is manifestly too important and far-reaching to be dealt with by a department of the Empire or by a departmental enquiry.

We therefore pray your lordship to reconsider this whole matter, with the view to such a committee or commission being appointed as will command public confidence, better represent the vast and varied interests concerned, and have unlimited power of enquiry and report.

We have the honour to remain, etc.

Lord George Hamilton caused the following reply to be sent:—

India Office, Whitehall, London, S.W.,
June 8, 1898.

Sir,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, forwarding a memorial from certain merchants, shipowners, manufacturers, and others respecting the composition of the Committee recently appointed to enquire into the Indian currency question, and the scope of the enquiry entrusted to that Committee.

With reference thereto, I am to acquaint you, for the information of the memorialists, that no change can now be made in the constitution of the Committee, but that they are not debarred by the terms of the reference made to them from considering any questions which they may deem relevant to the enquiry on which they are engaged.

In this connexion I am to invite your attention to the letter from Lord George Hamilton of the 16th ultimo, in reply to a memorial from bankers and merchants of the City of London, and to the answers given by his lordship in the House of Commons to various questions on the same subject.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

A. Godley.

David Bruce, Esq., 49, West George Street,
Glasgow, N.B.

The following letter was printed in the *Times* of June 3:—

To the Editor of the *Times*.

Sir,—You will kindly allow me to express my views on the subject of the Indian currency.

1. Fall or rise in exchange does not in itself (other circumstances being the same) matter in true international trade, which adjusts itself automatically to the requirements of exchange. I would illustrate this: I desire, for instance, to lay out £1,000 for sending a quantity of piece goods to India. I calculate the price of the manufacturer, exchange, whatever it may be, 1s., 2s., or 3s. per rupee, freight, insurance, commission, etc., and see whether the price in India would pay me a fair profit. If I think it would I enter into the transaction, sell my bill to an East India bank, and take the usual commercial chances of supply, demand, etc., when the goods arrive in India. I give this illustration in its simplest form of the general character of commercial transactions between this country and India. There are variations of the method of these transactions, but into them I do not enter at present, to avoid confusion. The main principle is the same.

2. Closing the mints or introducing a gold standard does not and cannot save a single farthing to the Indian taxpayers in their remittances for "home charges" to this country. The reason is simple. Suppose we take roundly £20,000,000 sterling in gold to be the amount of the "home charges." The Indian taxpayers have to send as much produce to this country as is necessary to buy £20,000,000 sterling, not an ounce less, no matter whatever may be the rupee, or whatever the standard—gold or silver—in India, England must receive £20,000,000 in gold or produce worth £20,000,000 in gold.

3. Closing of the mints and thereby raising the true rupee worth at present about 11d. in gold to a false rupee to be worth about 16d. in gold is a covert exaction of 45 per cent. more taxation (besides producing other effects which I do not mention) from the Indian taxpayers. The reason is again simple. Suppose a rayat has to pay Rs. 10 for land tax. This rupee means a fixed quantity of silver stamped with the mint stamp, and is truly worth at present only about 11d. of gold. By closing the mints this rupee is forced up to the worth of 16d. of gold, and the rayat is compelled to find this high-priced false rupee of 16d. of gold, or, in other words, to sell 45 per cent. more of his produce to get this false rupee, the Government thus getting 45 per cent. more taxation than it is entitled to, even according to its own "despotic" legislation.

4. The introduction of a gold standard, while it will not save a single farthing or a single ounce of produce to the Indian taxpayer in his payment of "home charges," as explained above, will simply add more to his already existing grievous burdens (and injure him in other ways which I avoid mentioning here), to the extent of the heavy cost of the alteration.

I have thus put forth four simple clear propositions. It is necessary for your other correspondents to consider whether these propositions are true or not. If once these fundamental issues or premises are settled, further discussion will have a sound basis to go upon. At present the whole controversy is based upon the assumption that closing of mints or introduction of a gold standard will produce to the Indian taxpayers an enormous saving in their remittances for "home charges." This, I say, is a mere fiction of the imagination and an unfortunate delusion.

I avoid also entering on the question of the remedy. It is useless to talk about the remedy before making a true diagnosis of the real character of the disease.

After the above four simple propositions are settled, I shall, with your permission, express my views about the real disease and its remedy.

I may here take the opportunity of saying that the constitution of the present Currency Committee is utterly unsatisfactory, as it does not contain any representative of the Indian taxpayers.—I remain, yours truly,

Washington House, Dadabhai Naoroji.
72, Anerley Park, S.E., May 29.

The Secretary of State for India has received the following reply to his letter of May 16 last, addressed to Mr. Hugh C. Smith, on the subject of the Indian Currency Committee:—

Bank of England, May 28, 1898.

My Lord,—I have to thank you for your letter in answer to that which was addressed to you by myself and others on the question of the composition and duties of the lately-appointed Indian Currency Committee.

I am glad to find it quite evident by your letter, as well as by your answer to Mr. Maclean in the House of Commons on May 17, that the intention of the Government is that the whole subject is to be before the Committee for full enquiry, both retrospectively and as a matter of present policy.

But I am bound to point out that, as regards the first point mentioned in our letter, your answer will not give the City the satisfaction it desires. Your intention was, as expressed in your speech in the House on March 29, that gentlemen of experience in connexion with India, whose names carry weight, should be asked to participate, and that they ought certainly to be more in number than the officials.

The Committee as now constituted has a majority of gentlemen taken from the official class; and as to non-official members it cannot be said, great as their ability is, that their names as a body will carry weight as practical men of experience in connexion with Indian commerce.

I am sure that, as you say, the importance of enlisting the confidence of the City is strongly felt by her Majesty's Government. You will have seen by the complete list of signatures to our letter that the Committee as at present constituted does not command that confidence, and I may assure your lordship that nothing will command it but a committee composed mainly "of men with through practical knowledge of Indian trade and with the effects of movements of bullion on the commerce of this and that country," with definite instructions to examine "the entire monetary policy of the Indian Government initiated in 1893."

Hugh C. Smith.

The *Spectator* (June 4) writes:—The Government seems to get no aid from "suggestions," and not much from Reports of Commissions. Suppose, in its despair, it picked out the best financier available, and sent him to India with plenary powers, might he not devise a working system? Great currency reforms have usually come in all countries from individual brains. Time is running short, for traders are paying 12 per cent., sometimes more, for accommodation on absolute security, and nobody will send capital to India while uncertainty as to the currency prevails.

Imperial Parliament.

Thursday, June 9.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PETITION.

East India (Contagious Diseases),—Petition from London against State regulation; to lie upon the Table.

THE PROGRESS OF THE "FORWARD" POLICY.

Mr. Herbert Roberts asked the Secretary of State for India whether he would state what was the estimated cost of the reconstruction of the forts in the Khyber Pass, and what was the probable cost of the proposed construction of fortified posts in the Lundi Kotal, at the western extremity of the Pass, together with the proposed strengthening of Kila Drash, on the Chitral Road:

And whether this renewed permanent outlay beyond the frontier of her Majesty's Indian possessions was in accordance with the despatches of the Government of India laid before Parliament in February last.

Lord G. Hamilton: Nothing has yet been settled as to the reconstruction of the fortified posts in the Khyber or the post at Kila Drash. Any necessary outlay on these posts would not be inconsistent with the policy laid down in my despatch of the 28th January last.

DISUSED STORES TRANSFERRED TO INDIA.

Mr. Herbert Roberts asked the Secretary of State for India, whether, in cases where at the instance of the War Office or any other British authorities ordnance or any other military stores that might have been superseded or become obsolete in the use of the British army had been transferred or supplied to the Indian armies, the director-general of stores at the India Office had full discretion as to accepting or taking over such disused or discarded stores:

Whether the auditor of the accounts of the Secretary of State in Council had full opportunity of testing the valuation at which such disused British stores were taken over for issue to the Indian armies:

And, whether the auditor at the India Office in his annual report to Parliament specified any irregularities which might arise in con-

nexion with the taking over of such stores charged to the Indian Government.

Lord G. Hamilton: In cases such as are described in the first clause of the honourable member's question, the Secretary of State for India in Council has a complete discretion as to accepting or refusing disused stores. The director-general of stores is his officer, and, as a rule, his representative in matters of this kind. The auditor has, to guide him in testing the valuation of such stores, all the papers at the disposal of the India Office; he cannot have access to any other papers except by the permission of the head of the department to which they belong. He invariably draws attention, in his annual report, to any irregularities, in this or in other matters which he may have noticed.

BRITISH "RESIDENTS" AND INDIAN PRINCES.

Mr. Herbert Roberts asked the Secretary of State for India whether he would state for what length of time the present British Resident at the Court of His Highness the Nizam, Mr. Plowden, had held that post:

At what date would his tenure of office terminate:

Whether last year the relations between the Residency and the Nizam were strained:

Whether any of the recent orders relating thereto, presented by the Government of India, would be presented to Parliament:

And whether a copy of the resolution, recently presented by the Council of the Umras, appointed by the Nizam in October, 1897, relating to the report by the local Comptroller-General on the finances of the Hyderabad States, would be shortly laid before Parliament.

Lord G. Hamilton: The present Resident was appointed to his post in March, 1892, and, subject to the pleasure of the Governor-General, may continue to hold it until, under the rules, he retires from the service. In the interest of the public service, I do not think it advisable to make any statement as to the relations between British Residents and the Native Princes with whom they have to deal, nor do I propose to present any papers on the affairs of Hyderabad.

THE NEW INDIA LOAN.

The report on the Resolution as to the East India Loan was agreed to, and a Bill founded thereon was introduced by Lord G. Hamilton and read a first time.

INDIA OFFICE (STORE DEPOT BILL).

The report on the Resolution relating to the India Office (Store Depôt) expenses was brought up and agreed to.

Friday, June 10.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH IN INDIA.

Mr. Herbert Lewis asked the Secretary of State for India, what was the amount paid by the taxpayers of India during the last financial year towards the maintenance of the clergy of the Established Church.

Sir James Fergusson asked the Under-Secretary of State for War what was the amount paid from the revenues of India in the last financial year to clergy other than those of the Church of England:

And, what was the estimated annual value of the endowments of Native religions, whether Christian, Mohometan, Hindu, etc., protected by the Government of India.

Lord G. Hamilton: The accounts for the last financial year are not yet available, but I can give the figures for 1896-7. Those for the previous year were furnished to the House in the Return C. 410, of August, 1897. The charges in India in 1896-97 on account of the clergy of various denominations were in tens of rupees as follows:—Church of England, 1,33,816; Church of Scotland, 10,828; Church of Rome, 31,620; other denominations, 6,929. Total: Rx. 1,83,193.

The annual value of the state endowments enjoyed under Government protection by Hindu and Mahometan religious institutions cannot be stated with accuracy, but in 1883 it was estimated at 3½ millions.

THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT AND THE INDIAN RAILWAYS.

Mr. Herbert Roberts asked the Secretary of State for India, whether his attention had been drawn to the fact that the Portuguese Government, interested by treaty through the West Portuguese Railway, had remonstrated against certain private agreements between the Great Indian Peninsular and the Southern Mahratta Railways, whereby traffic had been, and continued to be, diverted from the West Portuguese Railway to the detriment of trade in large districts of South-Western British India:

And, what action did the Government of India propose to take in the matter.

Lord G. Hamilton: Yes, sir. I am aware of the fact, and have for some time past been endeavouring to effect an agreement on the matters in dispute.

Monday, June 13.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PETITIONS.

East India (Contagious Diseases),—Petitions against State regulation; from Bath (five), and Talywith; to lie upon the Table.

THE HOME BUDGET.
TEA *VERSUS* TOBACCO.
"OUR PRIMARY CONCERN SHOULD BE FOR OUR OWN PEOPLE."

The House went into Committee on the Finance Bill, Mr. J. W. Lowther in the Chair.

Mr. J. A. Pease rose to move the omission of Clause 1, which deals with the duties and drawback on tobacco.

In the course of his speech the hon. member said: The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated in the Budget speech that 95 per cent. of the imported tobacco gave employment to British workers. He held that the tea imported gave far more employment than the tobacco imported. Again, 90 per cent. of the whole of the tea imported into this country came from Ceylon, and he appealed to those who urged the strengthening of the bonds between the mother country and the colonies to support the reduction being made on tea rather than on tobacco, as it would tend to improve the condition of workers in our Indian dependencies.

Sir M. Hicks Beach: The hon. member put forward several arguments intended to convince the Committee that tea should have the first claim. I do not agree at all with his argument drawn from the fact that there is a greater production of tea in India, and the colonies and Ceylon, than there is of tobacco in the British Empire. That undoubtedly is the fact, but I have ventured to say before that I think in this matter our primary concern should be for our own people (hear, hear), and there is no doubt—I believed it was an undisputed fact until the hon. member rather disputed it to-night—that, as my hon. friend the member for Liverpool said just now, the manufacture of tobacco is a most important industry in this country, employing a very large number of persons in the United Kingdom, an industry to which there is nothing corresponding with regard to tea. Therefore, anything which is likely to increase the sale of tobacco is, so far as it goes, a direct benefit to the very important manufacturing industry here. That, I confess, is one of the reasons why I have preferred tobacco to tea.

Mr. Herbert Lewis urged that a reduction of the tea duty would be a great advantage not only to the consumers, but to a million of our fellow-subjects who were engaged in the production of tea in India and Ceylon.

Tuesday, June 14.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PETITIONS.

East India (Contagious Diseases),—Petitions against State regulation; from Bath, and Weston; to lie upon the Table.

THE NEW LOAN BILL.
MOTION FOR EXAMINATION BY A SELECT COMMITTEE.
LORD G. HAMILTON'S ATTACK UPON SIR W. WEDDERBURN.

On the order for the second reading of the East India Loan Bill,

Sir W. Wedderburn moved:—"That this House declines to sanction a sterling loan of £10,000,000 until a Select Committee, on an examination of the East India accounts, shall have reported that such loan is in the interest of the Indian taxpayer, and will not unduly increase the burden he now sustains." The hon. baronet said that he trusted his amendment would commend itself to the approval of the House. Parliament was ultimately responsible for the solvency and welfare of India, but it was universally admitted that under existing arrangements the House of Commons did not exercise effective financial control over the Indian Executive. (Hear, hear.) What he therefore proposed was, not that the House of Commons should undertake any new duty, but that it should adopt measures calculated to carry out effectively its existing duty; and that in dealing with the present Bill, which was a most important one, it should as a trustee for India give to India's financial affairs the same care it gave to its own. One of the main objects of the Bill was to raise funds to carry out a vast programme of railway extension estimated to cost something like 30 millions of tens of rupees, and the main question was whether the financial condition of India justified their increasing the gold debt, which was already the source of so many sorrows, in order to hurry forward a great speculative commercial enterprise. Upon this point there was a great difference of opinion in India. On the one hand, there was the official opinion; and on the other, the independent public opinion of India. Sir James Westland, who gave the official view, considered these measures were justified, and, in support of them, put forward what was called "a prosperity Budget" for India, in which everything was shown in a rosy and optimistic colour. On the other hand, the independent public opinion of India was expressed by the Indian members of the Viceroy's Council, who were of opinion that this expenditure was not justified; and he would invite the attention of the House to the moderate, well-informed, and closely-reasoned speeches of these gentlemen, as contained in the Blue-book which had lately been published. (Hear, hear.) These gentlemen repudiated the "prosperity Budget," and said the equilibrium which had been produced in the Budget had only been obtained by excessive taxation of the people and improperly adding to the permanent debt of the country. Here they had a direct issue of fact as between official European opinion and independent Indian opinion, and it was the duty of Parliament to decide on this issue of fact. In order to do that it was absolutely necessary to refer the whole matter to a Select Committee which should contain experts. A careful examination might then be made and a report submitted which would enable the House to come to a satisfactory decision. The view of the general taxpayers of India would then be before the House as well as the official view, which, generally, only came before the House. Did any hon. member think that the House as then sitting was in a position and mood to deal adequately with these complex questions so vitally affecting the millions of India? Very few members attended, and even those who were present were not willing to give their undivided attention to the debate. The subject, no doubt, was not one which lent itself to sprightly or humorous treatment, but he thought he might, as an expert, claim the attention of the House for these few minutes, as he had been through the Indian official mill himself, and had, besides, made a special study of the Indian rayat for nearly 40 years. At the same time he

recognised that, although these questions were literally matters of life and death to the Indian peasantry, he could not now enter upon even the fringe of the subject. He therefore most earnestly asked the House to accept his motion, and give to the Indian taxpayer's case the chance of a fair hearing. He often asked himself whether the House really desired to learn the truth about India, and sometimes he almost doubted whether it did. There was no solid foundation for the blind and unreasoning acceptance of the official view of things which was so common in the House. Whether they looked at the treatment of famine or of the war or of the plague, in every one of those cases he maintained the Government of India had shown such a want of foresight that they had suffered disasters which might have been prevented by timely precautions. It might be thought that he was prejudiced in expressing that view, but Sir Griffith Evans, a steady supporter of the Government in the Viceregal Council, had himself placed it on record that the first information which the Government of India had of any mutiny or outbreak or frontier raid was generally the accomplished fact. "That the unexpected should sometimes happen," he said, "is inevitable; that nothing but the unexpected should happen is unsatisfactory." (Laughter.) Yes, that was true, though unsatisfactory was a mild word to express all the bloodshed and ruin which were the result of this inability to see and refusal to hear. But he could give Sir Griffith Evans the answer to his riddle: The reason why the Government of India could not see was because it shut its eyes; the reason why it did not hear was because it would not listen. The authorities were constantly under mischievous delusions regarding popular feeling, because they were out of touch with the people. They put too much confidence in secret police, in spies, traitors, and flatterers; and made it hot for those who told them disagreeable truths. If he might quote a proverb now become classical, it took a long spoon to sup kail with the Government of India. It needed a bold man to give the Government of India even a mouthful of truth when for so doing he was liable to be sent to penal servitude, or locked up without trial for nine months at a time. What was the experience of the House itself in this matter? Had it not found the noble lord a blind guide? Take the case of Chitral. After the expedition to Chitral the noble lord the Secretary of State was publicly warned of the great danger of encroaching on the independence of these wild tribes.

The SPEAKER said the hon. member would not be in order in going into that matter on the present Bill.

Sir W. WEDDERBURN, on the point of order, said his argument was that the official assurances, which were the only foundation for the present recommendation, were not to be trusted, and it was within the experience of the House that the House had been very much deceived by the official assurances.

The SPEAKER said the hon. member was quite at liberty to use that argument, but he could not illustrate it by going into the history and policy of the campaign.

Sir W. WEDDERBURN said he would not go into the question but would quote the words of the noble lord. He told the House that the frontier tribes welcomed the occupation of their mountain strongholds. These were his words:—"So far were they from regarding it in a hostile spirit, they welcomed the English occupation as the inauguration of a period of security not known before." This was mad optimism, and in a few short months the frontier was in a blaze, and 70,000 of the best troops in the world were required to coerce tribes who were supposed to welcome the extinction of their independence. Then, in reference to the widespread riots in Bombay, the noble lord read a telegram in these words: "In case of rumours of serious unrest among Mahometans of Bombay they are untrue." Scarcely were the words uttered when the city was in the hands of the mob and people were being shot in the streets. Again, the noble lord at first put difficulties in the way of establishing the Mansion House Famine Fund.

Lord G. HAMILTON: No, that is not so.

Sir W. WEDDERBURN said the noble lord would be able to state his view of the case, but the severity of the famine was foretold long before it was officially recognised.

The SPEAKER said that the reference to the Mansion House Fund was irrelevant.

Sir W. WEDDERBURN said the instances he had given were sufficient to induce caution in receiving official assurances. (Hear, hear.) He no more believed in the prosperity Budget than in the affection of the Afridi tribesmen. The Budget was proposed on the supposition that there would be a cycle of good years, but one good rainfall did not mean a series of good harvests, or justify plunging into speculative commercial enterprises. The agricultural population were weakened by famine and disease, and had lost much of their cattle. There was no foundation for these optimistic views, nor did the Government believe in these golden visions, or why were they asking for 3¾ millions to tide over difficulties the Secretary of State might have to encounter? To the relief of the heavy debenture interest he, of course, had no objection, but now that the great trunk lines had been completed, it was unwise to hurry on the extension of the railway system in India. This should be left to private enterprise. He objected to giving 3¾ millions to the Secretary of State, possibly for further frontier wars or other matters repugnant and injurious to the people of India, and to the addition to the gold debt, which was at the bottom of the currency troubles. He moved his amendment because he held strongly that, without proper Parliamentary enquiry, this Bill ought not to be permitted to become law. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. SOUTTAR seconded the motion. The subject under discussion was not a trifling but a very serious one, and the proposal put forward by the Government would add a solid amount to the debt of India. He did not say it was wrong to embark upon such a scheme, but the matter required very careful consideration, and it was only reasonable to ask that the whole question should be enquired into by a Select Committee. No one was satisfied with the taxation of India. The Secretary for India himself was not satisfied. And no wonder, for it was from the necessities of the peeple that the revenue was derived. The luxuries of the people of India could not be taxed, because they had not got luxuries to be taxed. But until the necessities of the people of India were free from taxation, the Secretary of State for India could not boast very much of the condition of the country. (Hear, hear.) The whole basis of the financial statement of the right hon. gentleman depended on the rupee being kept by artificial pressure at 1s. 4d., while its intrinsic value was only 11d. But how much longer could that be done? (Hear, hear.)

Mr. KENYON said the constituency he had the honour to represent was largely engaged in the trade with India, and they were most grateful to all the Indian officials for the way they had managed the famine affairs during the last twelve months. They thought they had done their duty in the most admirable manner. On every opportunity he would add his voice in praise of the administration and all the works that had been carried on in India in all the times of trouble.

Lord G. HAMILTON said that two speeches had been made on behalf of the amendment of a very different character. The hon. member for Dumfries had advanced perfectly legitimate arguments of a purely financial character, which appertained strictly to the amendment under the notice of the House. He proposed to answer those observations at the outset. The speech of the hon. baronet the member for Banffshire was of a very different character, and he would reserve his remarks as to that speech until the close of his observations. He was accused of making an optimistic speech. He simply laid before the House facts and figures, and he was fully confident that, unless some extraordinary difficulties occurred between now and the close of the present year, the estimated surplus would be largely exceeded. (Hear, hear.) He could not understand why any Minister should be called optimistic simply because he laid before the House facts and figures which were indisputably accurate. They might be more satisfactory than members of the House anticipated, but that did not in any way justify hon. gentlemen in doubting their accuracy. (Mr. Souttar: I did not doubt the accuracy of the figures.) He had no objection to the remarks of the hon. gentleman, but he thought he should be able to show it was advisable to assent to the loan without the appointment of a Select Committee. What were the objects for which this loan was required? In the first place, to pay off obligations of the Government of India which were contracted when the interest to be paid was higher than it was now. The second object was to give to the Indian Government the means of providing a certain proportion of the capital which they annually expended on reproductive works. The practice of the Indian Government was to provide as much of that capital as possible out of the cash balances, and then to borrow as much as the Indian loan market would provide, and only fall back on the money market here for the residue of the sum required. It was no doubt necessary to see that the indebtedness of India should not be unduly run up, and that, in borrowing for reproductive works, the output was beneficial to the taxpayer, and did not ultimately increase the charge upon him. He had had a return prepared to show what had been the result of the capital outlay of the Indian Government during the last 40 years, and it showed that the outlay had not only been beneficial, but had indeed tended to reduce taxation. In this return was included the total charge for interest on debt, for interest paid to companies, for annuities paid in purchase of undertakings, for surplus profits paid to railway companies, and for surveys of lines not yet undertaken. Under these heads the total charge in 1861—almost the first quiet year in which the Crown assumed possession of India—was Rx. 5,705,000. For the present year the estimate under the same heads reached Rx. 18,799,000. That was an additional charge of about Rx. 13,000,000, and, assuming that the Indian Government borrowed at 3 per cent. throughout, that represented the total sum borrowed in the interval to be about Rx. 400,000,000. What had been obtained in return for it? The net profits from reproductive works constructed by borrowed money at the commencement of the period was Rx. 384,000. For the present year the net profits were estimated at Rx. 14,138,000; and the upshot was that, whereas 40 years ago the net burden on the revenue of India for indebtedness was Rx. 5,300,000, in the present year it was Rx. 4,660,000. (Cheers.) India, too, had the benefit of having invested something like Rx. 400,000,000, and that expenditure had been of inestimable value. The great difficulty of India was congestion of population in certain parts of the country, and unless the railway system had been developed and irrigation had been largely pushed on it would have been impossible for the Indian Government to deal with the famine which had occurred without the loss of millions of lives. (Hear, hear.) He should have added that in giving these figures he had in both cases included the loss by exchange. The House might, therefore, fairly continue to give its support to this policy of reproductive expenditure. There was no question which had been more carefully examined by Select Committees of the House of Commons. He himself was chairman of one which sat 20 years ago, when the expenditure on works was reduced to the smallest dimensions, and only when the credit of India rose, and the construction of railways was more economically effected by borrowing, was a larger scheme of construction permitted. There was no necessity now to appoint a Committee on a subject on which there was already almost a superfluity of information. As to the reserve, he had said that there should always be a reserve behind the Secretary of State, because, in case of any exceptional combination of difficulties—such as a famine or a serious war—the cash balances would be so reduced that the Secretary of State would not be able to draw sufficient money to meet his gold obligations in this country. Then Parliament would have to be suddenly assembled. At once there would be questioning all over the country as to the reason for it; and it would be declared that India was insolvent. (Hear, hear.) He thought that it was plain to anybody that the Secretary of State should have this reserved power in case the Indian Government were in difficulties. He did not at all look forward optimistically to many of the difficulties which the Indian Government would have to encounter, and in regard to the distress of the agricultural population

Lord Elgin had collected materials on that subject with the view of legislation. He hoped next Session that some measure of legislation would be passed. That was practically all he had to say so far as the financial argument was concerned. He came to a very different subject. There was no man in that House, except the member for Banffshire (Sir W. Wedderburn), who was not proud of the magnificent past of the Indian Civil Service, to which the hon. member once belonged, in standing between the Indian people and famine and plague. (Loud cheers.) But not one single word had fallen from the hon. member in praise of his old service. He never allowed to escape an opportunity of attacking and disparaging it. (Cries of "Oh, oh!")

Sir W. Wedderburn rising, Lord George Hamilton still stood at the Table and declined to give way. The hon. member exclaimed, before resuming his seat, "That is an incorrect statement." Rising again, he asked the Speaker whether he had not the right to interrupt and make a personal explanation.

The Speaker: The hon. member has no right to interrupt and to insist on speaking when another hon. member is in possession of the House. When the noble lord has concluded his speech the hon. baronet will be entitled to make a personal explanation.

Sir W. Wedderburn: But, Mr. Speaker——

The Speaker: Order, order.

Lord G. Hamilton: I will not give way to the hon. member. (Cheers.) Those hon. members who had heard the hon. baronet's speech and who had heard him attack the Government of India had heard him say, amongst other pleasant things, that the only people to whom the Indian Government gave credence were spies and people of that character, while it was made hot for those who told the truth. (Cheers, and cries of "Hear, hear" from Dr. Tanner.) The hon. baronet had a perfect right to make that statement as far as his own experience went. On behalf of the remainder of the Civil Service he met the statement with the flattest denial. (Cheers.) The hon. baronet had chosen to throw doubt upon the accuracy of his (Lord G. Hamilton's) information. Well, he was wrong in one particular. The hon. baronet said that the Indian Government should obtain their information from Native sources, and Native sources alone. The Indian Government, he believed, did everything they could to ascertain the views and opinions of different sections of the Native community, and Lord Sandhurst attempted to take that course in regard to Bombay. He was assured that there was no reason to apprehend the slightest danger of disturbances taking place. He could only regret that Lord Sandhurst was misinformed from those very sources to which the hon. baronet alluded. That was the only occasion to which the hon. baronet could point as showing that he had given incorrect information. He protested strongly against the tactics of the hon. baronet, who, moving a harmless motion of that kind, made these sort of statements which were telegraphed out to India and did much harm. (Hear, hear.) If the hon. baronet wanted to destroy the foundations of British rule in India, let him say so openly, but to make speeches of the kind he had just made, and then to pretend that he was a supporter of British rule, was to take up a position absolutely inconsistent. (Hear, hear.) He would not, but for these statements of the hon. baronet as to the incorrectness of his information, have referred to a painful incident which occurred last year when two British officers were foully murdered at Poona. The hon. baronet produced a petition upon which he wished to move the adjournment of the House, and which contained gross allegations against British soldiers. (Cheers.) The hon. baronet proposed that action should be taken on that petition, and that the Bombay Government should be attacked on the strength of those allegations. Those statements were proved to be false, and the signatures to the petition to be forged (cheers); but the hon. baronet collected a number of members of the House, and before them gross allegations were made against British officers and soldiers. Those allegations were proved to be false (cheers), and the hon. baronet humbly apologised at the end of the Session for having promulgated these calumnies on his own countrymen. (Cheers.) Therefore when the hon. baronet questioned his good faith——

Dr. Clark asked whether it was in order to impute to a member that he promulgated falsehoods.

The Speaker: I need scarcely say it would not be in order for the noble lord to impute to the hon. baronet that he himself promulgated calumnies. I understood the noble lord to say that the hon. baronet promulgated allegations which turned out to be false. (Hear, hear.)

Lord G. Hamilton repeated that the hon. baronet had to stand up and humbly apologise for associating himself with statements which were proved to be gross and outrageous calumnies on his own countrymen. (Cheers.) That being so, he declined to put himself on an equality with the hon. baronet as to the credence to be placed on his good faith. (Cheers.)

Sir W. Wedderburn said the noble lord had no doubt unintentionally misrepresented him when he said he never recognised the great services of the Indian Civil Service. When this Bill was introduced he said he wished to associate himself with what had been said of the Government officers during the famine, and that no praise was too great for them. As regarded the second statement of the noble lord he thought there was some misunderstanding. He did not promulgate or express any opinion as to what was done at Poona by British soldiers or anyone else. There had been a petition signed by 2,000 persons against the employment of British soldiers there, and he requested the noble lord to have enquiry made into the allegations in that petition. He expressed no opinion one way or another. (Hear, hear.) The third point was that, failing to get the petition before the noble lord himself, he called together a few members interested in India to give them an opportunity of hearing what certain Native gentlemen had to say with regard to the occurrences at Poona. It turned out afterwards that there were no means of proving or disproving their statements. (Ministerial cheers and counter cheers.) He asked for an enquiry, but the people who made the allegations were not prepared to come forward and substantiate them. (Ministerial cheers.) He asked for enquiry because he considered that when such statements were made it was for the honour of the British name that they should be properly enquired into. (Hear, hear.) When the people who made the statements were unable to prove them, at the first opportunity he made an apology in the House. The noble lord seemed to think that disgraceful, but he thought it was a straightforward and gentlemanly thing to do. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Buchanan hoped the hon. member for Banffshire would not go to a division, as a Royal Commission was enquiring into the very questions which he wished a Select Committee to consider. The appointment of such a committee would be supererogatory. Nobody regretted more than he did the injudicious language which the hon. member for Banffshire had sometimes used with regard to British officials in India. No service in the world was more unselfishly devoted than the Indian Civil Service, from Lord Elgin down to its humblest member. (Hear, hear.) The subject of reproductive works, and particularly of the railways of India, had been investigated by the Commission, and the Accountant-General of India had stated that the capital expenditure on the railways yielded a revenue of $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. That, therefore, was not a bad investment of public money. He regretted that the Commission had not yet been able to issue its report, and hoped that the noble lord would assist its members to bring their enquiry to a speedy conclusion.

Dr. Clark thought his hon. friend would be quite justified in taking a division, because no action ought to be sanctioned by that House before it was in possession of all the facts of the case. They ought to know exactly in what position the floating debt would be after the proposed financial operation, and whether the money for reproductive works was to be raised on a gold basis in Europe or on a silver basis in India. They ought also to have information as to the three millions set apart for contingencies. (Lord G. Hamilton said that it was usual to have a reserve of considerable amount.) Before a Bill of this kind was allowed to pass he asserted that the House ought to have further enquiry made. The report of the Royal Commission which had been sitting for three years should at least be before them.

Mr. Leuty said the noble lord the Secretary for India seemed to think that he could suppress discussion in this House as he had suppressed discussion in the Native Press in India, but he hoped he would not succeed. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Shee was speaking at midnight, when the debate stood adjourned.

Thursday, June 16.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE COMMITTEE ON CURRENCY.

WANTED: COPIES OF THE EVIDENCE.

Sir William Houldsworth asked the Secretary of State for India, if Members of Parliament could be allowed to obtain copies of the evidence given before the Indian Currency Committee, when printed for the use of the members of the Committee, in the same way as the evidence given before the Liquor Licensing Laws Commission could be obtained.

Lord G. Hamilton: In my letter of April 29, to the Chairman of the Indian Currency Committee, which has been published, I said that, "in accordance with the precedent of 1892-93, its proceedings, so long as it is in session, will for obvious reasons not be open to the public, though they will be published when its labours are over, with the evidence and information it has collected."

I do not think that it would be desirable to alter this decision.

The following notices of motion appear in the order-book of the House of Commons:—

Mr. Samuel Smith (on going into Committee on East India Revenue Accounts)—To move: That, in view of the poverty of India, aggravated by plague, famine, and war, and the unsatisfactory state of its finances, a more economical administration is urgently needed, also a better system of raising the revenue, and some aid for the country in regard to special expenditure on the North-West frontier.

Mr. Pickersgill,—East India (Penal Code)—That an humble Address be presented to her Majesty, praying that her Majesty will be pleased to disallow the Indian Penal Code Amendment Act, 1898.

Sir Joseph Pease,—Opium—To call attention to the trade between India and China in opium, and to move a resolution.

Mr. Herbert Roberts,—East India (Sedition and Control of the Press)—To call attention to the recent alterations in the Indian laws relating to Sedition and the Control of the Press; and to move a Resolution. [*An early day.*]

Mr. Parker Smith,—East India (Sedition and Control of the Press)—To call attention to the recent alterations in the Indian Laws relating to Sedition and the Control of the Press; and to move a Resolution. [*An early day.*]

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